STRATEGIES LEADERS SHOULD USE TO RESPOND TO HOSTILE QUESTIONS REGARDING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES: AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

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Michael S. Gore

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to develop a tool, using Speech Act Theory, which will help leaders better handle hostile questions they face during organizational change. Specifically, speech act theory, which outlines five question-response strategies, was used to test the effectiveness of question responses to hostile questions encountered during organizational change. The first step in this research was to identify the types of hostile questions that are asked during organizational change. Next, these questions were reviewed and like questions were grouped into one of five preexisting categories. Responses based on the five response strategies were then developed for a representative sample of the questions (two from each category). The final step in this research involved pairing each of the responses against one another for a given question, which enabled the selection of the most favorable response strategy.

This research tells the leader what type of hostile questions to expect. The research also provides general rules or guidance about the content of the responses that can be used to respond to these hostile questions. The research effort determined change targets' (i.e., membership of an organization) preferences in reference to desired responses to hostile questions. This information can be used by leaders as a guide as they initiate and implement change.

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Chapter 1—Introduction and Literature Review

To fulfill employees' information needs during times of change, many organizations arrange large gatherings of employees—either company wide meetings (e.g., "town-hall" meetings) or representative subgroup meetings (e.g., seminars)—where organizational leaders provide the vital change-related information and address employees' specific questions (Lewis, 1999; Richardson & Denton, 1996). This group communication strategy offers organizational leaders a number of advantages. First, these group meetings tend to communicate change-related information efficiently because leaders have the opportunity to address large numbers of people in relatively short periods of time. Second, these sessions allow leaders to express their explicit support for an upcoming change, which is arguably a necessary condition for the successful implementation of changes (Young & Post, 1993), in a face-to-face setting, which is arguably the most effective means of communicating change to employees (Lewis, 1999; Smeltzer, 1991). Finally, leaders have the opportunity to ameliorate the specific concerns and anxieties that are felt by organizational members by allowing those attending the meeting to ask direct questions and get immediate answers (Young & Post, 1993).

Although these group meetings seem appealing, the emotional responses to most organizational changes can challenge the communication skills of organizational leaders as they try to answer the questions and discuss the change with the members of their organizations. Specifically, leaders can encounter hostile questions from employees attending these group meetings. For instance, during a recent meeting that announced the conversion to a new information management system, the first question asked was, “When are you going to stop making my job harder with these changes?” Such hostile questions can end the interactive, support-building dialog that the meeting is designed to foster by threatening the positive perception that organizational members have of the leader, the organization, and the change. When confronted with these situations, the organization’s senior leader becomes a crisis manager trying to convey the positive ideas behind the proposed change while simultaneously responding to the concerns of the questioning employee.

Given the implications that these hostile questions can have, leaders should be ready to deal with such situations when encountered. Unfortunately, the current guidance available to organizational leaders who encounter hostile questions during group meetings has at least two major shortcomings: (a) the prescriptions that describe ways of dealing with hostile questions (e.g., don’t “take the bait” or explain why the question can’t be answered) are too vague to judge how adequately the responses satisfy the questioner while maintaining a positive, open communication environment, and (b) the examples of effective responses (e.g., “The new management information system will reduce processing time and allow each of you to more effectively deal with customers’

concerns.") are to specific, allowing leaders to develop responses to idiosyncratic questions only.

This research effort was designed to help leaders better handle hostile questions they face during change. Specifically, speech act theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969) outlines five theoretically grounded and empirically tested question-response strategies that were used to develop effective question responses. The research effort will determine change targets' (i.e., membership of an organization) preferences in reference to desired responses to hostile questions. This information can be used by leaders as a guide as they initiate and implement change.

Responding to hostile questions is only one small part of successfully implementing organizational change. Thus, the following discussion outlines the importance of organizational change and then looks at the various stages of the change process. Next, strategies available to leaders that can be used to facilitate change are discussed where the most important strategy, communication, is emphasized.

Background

Many have suggested that the continual increase of global competition has accelerated the rate of organizational change (Hitt, Ireland et al., 2001). Change comes in many forms such as reengineering, restructuring, and downsizing. Managers are being forced to change employee's attitudes about work, their jobs, and their psychological contracts with their employer as they introduce many of these initiatives. The rapid introduction of new changes can cause a great deal of hostility and frustration within the organization. Armenakis, Harris, and Feild (1999) describe one of these reactions as cynicism; in that, employees feel the latest wave of change is nothing more than the

"program of the month." With this attitude, it is clearly logical for the employees to wait to see how serious the organization is about the change before they begin to put forth any effort to institutionalize it. The employee participation is critical to the implementation of the change; therefore, attitudes such as the one described above are obviously detrimental to the change efforts' timeliness and success.

Like all organizations, the Department of Defense (DoD) is continually changing. The current initiative, termed *transformation*, is a comprehensive effort aimed at restructuring the entire DoD. "The U.S. military is pursuing not a single transformation, but a host of transformations including precision, surveillance, networked communications, robotics and information processing. When these transformations come together, the resulting synergy could produce a revolutionary level of improvement in the ability of U.S. joint forces to dominate the battle space. The convergence of military transformations within our land, air, sea, space and information forces could allow the development of new concepts of operations that will further exploit our ability to conduct military actions in a parallel rather than a sequential manner" (Wolfowitz, 2002). Change occurs everywhere, and its importance is unquestionable.

Change Implementation

The process of introducing and implementing change is complex. To summarize the process and integrate the literature that discusses this process, Figure 1 is provided. The model is centered on the stages organizations progress through as they make changes. The efficiency that organizations progress through these stages and the extent to which change is adopted is influenced by the environment (i.e., organizational characteristics, organizational members, and facilitator attributes) where the change is

being introduced, and the strategies (i.e., participation, communication, ceremonies, and human resource management) used to introduce the change.

Change Process

Lewin (1947) developed a three-stage change implementation model to describe how an organization moves through the change process. Lewin called his three stages unfreezing, moving, and refreezing. Lewin's theory of change suggests that change consists of altering the driving and resisting forces of the organization. This would facilitate the movement and stabilization of the organization to meet the change requirement. Unfreezing is defined as behavior that increases the individual's acceptance to a possible change. Moving can be described as an alteration to the resisting forces that causes a shift in the individual's acceptance level of the change initiative. Reinforcing these alteration forces so that the system begins to stabilize is called the refreezing stage (Zand & Sorenson, 1975). Zand and Sorenson's (1975) study to test Lewin's three-stage theory led them to an important conclusion. The hardest and most important part of the implementation process is the unfreezing stage. That is, if the organization is not prepared for the change in the beginning, later efforts aimed towards implementation will encounter greater resistance and could possibly be a waste of time. Most models found in the literature can be related back to Lewin's three-stage process.

Armenakis, Harris and Feild's (1999) four-stage model, like many change implementation models, is built around Lewin's (1947) model. The stages described by Armenakis are readiness, adoption, commitment, and institutionalization. Readiness, which coincides with Lewin's unfreezing stage, involves the organization's attitudes and intentions towards a change. The adoption and commitment stages encompass Lewin's

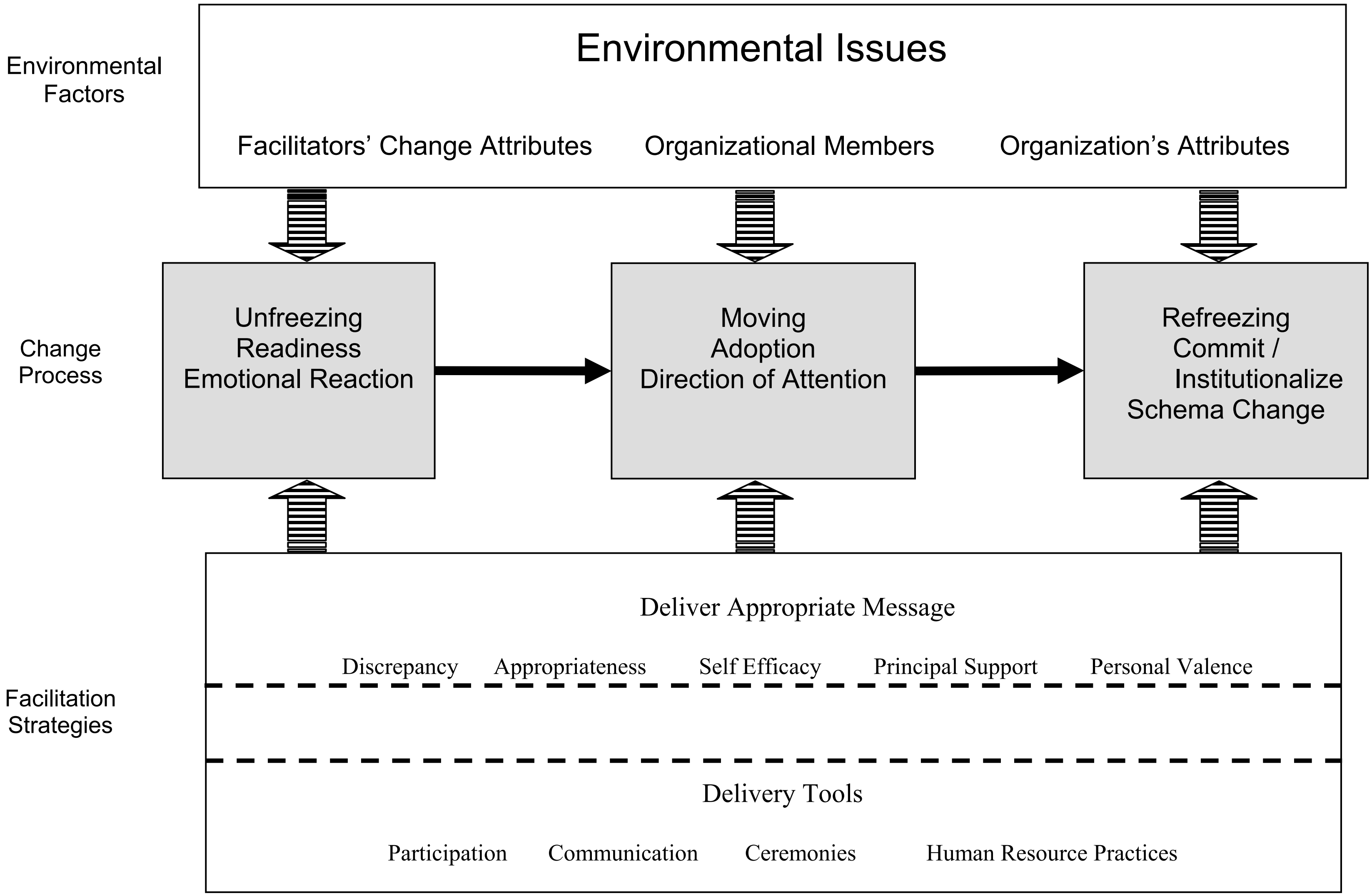

Figure 1. Change Process

moving stage. Adoption is the trial period of the new change, in that the organization accepts the change but may still reject it in the future; in turn, commitment is defined as the point at which the organization begins to embrace the change. The final stage in this model, institutionalization, is the same as Lewin's refreezing stage. It is at this point the organization's degree of commitment is defined and thus the new state of the system.

George and Jones' (2001) Seven-Step Change Model, like Armenakis, Harris and Feild's (1999) model, is built around Lewin's (1947) three-stage model. Figure 1 shows three of George and Jones' major steps inserted with their corresponding term from Lewin's model. Emotional reaction and moderation of this emotion is very similar to the unfreezing stage suggested by Lewin. Directing attention and challenging existing schema encompass parts of Lewin's moving stage. George and Jones' last step, schema change, is the same as Lewin's refreezing stage.

Whether you look at the most contemporary models of change implementation or the first models ever produced, at least one thing remains constant. Change occurs in stages and these stages can go by many different names. However, most change implementation models can be reduced to the simple model introduced by Lewin. Change occurs in stages, but the rate at which an organization moves through these stages depends on many things such as environmental factors and implementation strategies.

Environmental Factors

While a comprehensive list of environmental factors affecting organizational change would be impossible to develop, this research will review three general categories that influence organizational change: the facilitator's attributes (i.e., the attributes of the individual directing the implementation of the change), the members' attributes (i.e., the

attributes of the organizational members asked to make the change), and the organization's attributes. Damanpour (1991) suggest that these three areas have been the most studied and argues they are the primary factors that influence change.

The facilitator or change agent plays an important role in the implementation of organizational change. The most important attribute that a change agent should possess is credibility (Armenakis, Harris et al., 1999). The primary components of credibility identified by Kouzes and Posner (1993) are honesty, competence vision, and inspiration. Slater and Rouner (1992) cite research that shows that changes in cognitions of organizational members have been linked empirically to the credibility of the change agent. Similar research has demonstrated results along the same line (Buller & McEvoy, 1989; Eisenberger, Fasolo et al., 1990; Niehoff, Enz et al., 1990; Nystrom, 1990). Credibility is developed through an individual's behaviors. It is important to note that a credible change agent, while necessary, is not the only factor critical to successful implementation.

The organizational members, much like the change agent, are vital in the change process. Organizational members must often modify their behaviors to reach the objectives of a change effort. Armenakis Harris and Feild (1999) suggest that organizational members' commitment is ultimately the determining factor in the institutionalization of change. They also explain that two individuals given the same information can be expected to act differently. Individual differences can be measured with Kirton's (1984) Adaption-Innovation Inventory. This has been used to categorize individuals as either adaptors or innovators. Adaptors are more likely to resist change, while innovators are more apt to embrace it. Another scale used to assess individual

differences is Snyder's (1974) Self-Monitoring Scale. It was used by Burkhardt (1991) who determined that self-monitors' (i.e., those who are more attentive to social comparison information) attitudes toward change were more influenced by opinion leaders and other individuals in their work groups. Low self-monitors were more influenced by individuals performing jobs on a similar scale to their own. The point is that individuals do react differently; and in a change environment, these individuals (organizational members) play an important role in successful change implementation.

The organization's attributes also play an important role in moving an organization through change. Damanpour (1991) analyzed the findings of 23 empirical studies dealing with the role of 13 content, contextual, and process factors on institutionalization. This paper will describe three of these factors (one from each category). Functional differentiation (*content*) was defined as the extent to which an organization is divided into different units. That is, the number of units under the top management level. Technical knowledge was a *context* variable defined by an organization's technical resources and technical potential. It was measured by the presence of a technical group or number of technical personnel. A *process* variable, which was more related to this research, was communication. Damanpour (1991) actually measured external and internal communication as two separate variables. External communication was defined by the organization's ability to be in contact with its task environment, and was measured by the degree of organization members' involvement and participation in extra organizational professional activities involving various elements of the task environment. Internal communication was defined by the organization's ability to communicate among its units or groups. Damanpour's (1991)

study found positive relationships between change and each of the variables described above. Again, it is evident that the organization's attributes play an important role in change implementation.

Implementation Strategies

Much like the plethora of literature describing change implementation models, change implementation strategies are well documented with many of the same thoughts. This section of the literature review will look at strategies defined and included in Armenakis's four-stage change implementation model and relate other literature to these strategies. These strategies are: participation, human resource management practices, diffusion, ceremonies, and communication.

Participation

Participation is defined by the phrase itself, that is, organizational learning through experience (Armenakis, Harris et al., 1999). Fundamentally, participation in a change effort should affect the individual participant's behavior. Paul Nutt (1986) explains that the use of any participation strategy can improve the relationship between the manager and the organization's members. Coch and French (1948) found that organizational members reacted more favorably and became more committed when they participated in decision making processes than when they did not. Nutt (1986) divides participation into four types that are defined by the level of participation being used. Armenakis refers only to active participation and divides this into three tactics: enactive mastery, vicarious learning, and participative decision making.

Enactive mastery. The enactive mastery tactic requires the manager to allow for incrementally increased responsibility for the change. New elements of the change are

not introduced until the organizational member has fully mastered the previous change element. Individuals are not faced with the daunting task of implementing the entire change at once; rather they make small victories towards the final goal of the complete change effort. This approach can lead to the gradual embrace of the change that is accompanied by the organizational members' understanding of the change's importance/appropriateness (Armenakis, Harris et al., 1999).

Vicarious learning. Vicarious learning occurs when organizational members learn the new change through observation of others that have already accepted the change. This is most effective when the individuals being observed are highly respected individuals in the organization. Vicarious learning assumes the "if he can do it so can I" attitude. Much like the enactive mastery tactic, this tactic should help provoke enhanced efficacy and an increase in perceived appropriateness. The idea is that as more and more members begin adopting the change others will follow because they want to be like those that have adopted.

Participative decision making. It has been demonstrated that organizational members are more likely to embrace a change effort when they have a say in the decisions involving the change than when they do not (Beer, M. et al., 1990; Pasmore & Fagans, 1992). This makes inherent sense, but this tactic is not always plausible. It would not be likely for all organizational members to have a say in the downsizing of the organization or in who should receive pay bonuses. However, it is possible, and most likely beneficial, for the organizational members to be involved in the organization's mission and strategy goals (Armenakis, Harris et al., 1999).

Human Resource Management Practices

Armenakis et al. (1999) divides human resource management practices into four areas: selection, performance appraisal, compensation, and training and development. These practices can be used to help encourage the acceptance of a change. Selection refers to the firing, hiring, transferring, and promoting or demoting of organizational members. The selection technique is quite simple. The manager can use selection practices to put the right member in the right job. That is, a member that has shown a willingness to embrace change may be promoted or simply allowed to keep his job. On the other hand, a member that resists the change effort can be demoted or even fired. This practice may have to be used only once, because individuals will observe the effects that others suffered due to a lack of commitment to the change.

Performance appraisals can be used to provide feedback to organizational members. Armenakis cites several studies that have proven feedback to be important to changing an organizational member's behavior. Feedback sessions provide the manager the opportunity to discuss with the organizational member how they are doing in reference to the change effort. Compensation is simply a reward mechanism. The manager can use compensation to reward the organizational members that embrace the change and perform well. The perception that compensation creates in the organizational member can encourage him/her to perform well as well as demonstrates the importance/necessity of the change. Compensation may coincide with the selection technique, in that; an individual that receives a promotion would likely be compensated for it. Training and development can be used to help facilitate a change effort. The manger can provide change-specific training to help with the understanding of new technology such as a new computer system. Armenakis suggests that this training is

more beneficial if it is provided from within the organization. Training helps to reinforce the appropriateness of the change, and also demonstrates the organization's support for the change (Armenakis, Harris et al., 1999).

Armenakis list diffusion practices as a separate implementation strategy, but it appears to be similar to human resource management. Diffusion practices involve introducing the change to a small portion/group of the organization in an effort to test and fine-tune it. Once the change produces the desired results, it can be transferred to the rest of the organization. Diffusion practices will also allow for the change to be cancelled if it does not accomplish its intended purpose with the initial portion of the organization. In this scenario, the manager does not have to subject the entire organization to a less than appropriate change. In contrast, a successful change experience by the first portion of the organization could help to increase acceptance across the rest of the organization. Organizational members that experienced the initiation of the change can spread the word of its effectiveness and iterate the manager's position of its appropriateness. Organizational members may be more willing to embrace a change that their co-workers have already adopted (Armenakis, Harris et al., 1999).

Ceremonies

Armenakis et al. (1999) describe ceremonies by comparing it to a retirement ceremony. When an individual that has devoted a considerable amount of time to an organization retires, his or her departure is usually celebrated with a ceremony. The retirement ceremony reflects on the individual's past; but more importantly, it concludes with an emphasis on the individual's future. The literature suggests that this same approach can be taken during times of organizational change. The organization can

formally come together to reflect on the past and conclude with an emphasis on where the organization is going in the future. These ceremonies can be used to reinforce the organizational members' adoption of new changes.

Communication Strategies

Communication in itself is critical to the change implementation process. Organizational development theorists consider open communication channels fundamental (Scheirer, 1981). Considerable empirical research supports Schierer's claim that the flow of information is crucial to organizational change (Baldridge & Burnham, 1975). Covin and Kilmann (1990) found that a high degree of communication had very positive impact on large-scale change programs. They also reported that poor communication (i.e., failure to share information or to inform people adequately of what changes are necessary and why they are necessary) had a highly negative impact on change implementation. Nelson, Cooper and Jackson (1995) found that lack of communication was inversely related to job satisfaction over time through an organizational change. Daly and Geyer (1994) found information that explained change was related to perceptions of fairness regarding change and subsequent decisions to stay in the organization after a change was implemented. Armenakis, Harris and Feild (1999) discuss two types of communication strategies.

Persuasive communication. With the persuasive communication strategy, the manager communicates the change by offering reasons that make the change seem more acceptable. For example, the manager might describe how bad things will be if the change does not take place, and at the same time explain how much better things will be once the change is institutionalized. This, referential account, is only one of the four

social accounts of persuasive communication described by Armenakis et al. (1999). The other three are causal accounts, ideological accounts, and penitential accounts. Armenakis et al. (1999) explains that not only is the context of the information important, but also the nature by which the message is delivered plays an important role in showing the manager's support for the change effort. That is, logic suggests that if the manager is willing to devote time and resources to getting the message out, the organizational members may have perceptions of how devoted the manager is to the change.

Management of internal/external information. This part of the communication strategy refers to two important areas: internal data and external data. Internal data involves organizational members' attitudes, productivity, cost, and other performance indicators (Armenakis, Harris et al., 1999). External data refers to information obtained from outside the organization such as direct communication with the customer or information published by the media. The idea behind this strategy is to involve the organizational members in the collection of both types of data. It is suggested that the members will be more likely to embrace a change if they are familiar with the information, both internal and external, that is responsible for it (Armenakis, Harris et al., 1999).

It is well documented that communication is essential to implementing change, but the inherent problem still remains. There is no guidance to suggest what specific information should be provided and how it should be communicated. Thus, the studies are lacking some level of specificity. The purpose of this study is not to address the entire communication issue, but rather one small part. Leaders and change agents encounter hostile questions during organizational change. These hostile questions have

no desirable responses. Speech act theory addresses some of the issues on how to communicate; specifically, it offers politeness strategies that can be used to respond to hostile questions.

Speech Act Theory

The idea behind speech act theory can be traced back to a series of documented lectures delivered by Austin (1962). Austin proclaimed that a verbal utterance not only was the act of saying something (before Austin, philosophers believed that sentences were used simply to say things), but also the act of doing something. For example, if you say to your spouse *I'll cook dinner tonight,* you are not just saying something but you are also making a commitment. Or, if you say to your neighbor after you run over his dog *I'm sorry I didn't see him,* you are not just saying something but also apologizing. And finally, if you say to the mailman as he is pulling away *Can you wait, I have two more letters,* you are not just saying something but also making a request.

In essence, Austin concluded every speech event (speech act) has two parts: a locutionary act (i.e., the act of saying something) and an illocutionary act (i.e., the act of doing something) (Parker & Riley, 1994). The locutionary act part of a speech event, as stated above, refers simply to the act of speaking. In most cases, this is done by using a noun and a verb. The noun and verb make up a sentence which is used to describe what the speaker is uttering.

The illocutionary act refers to what the speaker does when uttering the sentence. There are an endless number of illocutionary acts possible through an utterance. They include such acts as stating, requesting, questioning, promising, apologizing, and appointing. However, John Searle, Austin's former student, points out that these acts can

be classified into six main groups: representative, directive, commissive, expressive, declaration, and question. Table 1 summarizes these six groups. The representative class includes acts of stating, asserting, denying, confessing, admitting, notifying, concluding, and predicting. The representative class is an utterance used to describe a state of affairs. The directive class includes acts of requesting, ordering, forbidding, warning, advising, suggesting, insisting, and recommending. This class is an utterance to try to get the listener to do something. The commissive class includes acts of promising, vowing, volunteering, offering, guaranteeing, pledging, and betting. This class is an utterance used to commit the speaker to do something. The expressive class is an utterance used to express the emotional state of the speaker. This class includes apologizing, thanking,

Table 1. Classification of Illocutionary Acts

Category	Definition
Representative	An utterance used to describe a state of affairs.
Directive	An utterance to try to get the listener to do something.
Commissive	An utterance used to commit the speaker to do something.
Expressive	An utterance used to express the emotional state of the speaker.
Declaration	An utterance used to change the status of some entity
Question	An utterance used to get the questioned person to provide information.

congratulating, condoling, welcoming, deploring, and objecting. The declaration class includes appointing, naming, resigning, baptizing, surrendering, and excommunicating. This class is an utterance used to change the status of some entity. The last class, the

question, is the primary interest of this research. A question, the focus of this research, is an utterance used to get the questioned person to provide information. This class includes acts of asking and inquiring.

Questions are used when a questioner desires information. Regardless of how well a change agent communicates a change effort, questions will undoubtedly arise during times of organizational change. Questions can be socially threatening to both the requestor and the addressee. Because of this, Brown and Levinson (1987) argued that there was a need for strategies that can be used to lessen the threat when responding to questions. These are commonly referred to as "politeness" strategies.

Politeness Strategies and the need for Explanations

Questions in general represent one of the acts, the act of asking or inquiring, but the responses to these questions also represent an act. The focus of this research is to develop responses to questions that serve as a polite way to say, "I am not answering that question." Leaders can not answer the question because they are hostile in nature and have no desirable response. With the use of politeness strategies, leaders are hoping to provide a response to the requestor that meets his or her information needs, or at least provide a response that does not negatively affect the communicating environment.

Labov and Fanshel (1977) explain that when a speech act request is socially threatening, speakers should invoke various politeness strategies to lessen the threat. For example, imagine a situation where two friends are at the movie theater. One friend could tell the other, "Pass the popcorn." However, a more polite way to make the request would be to question the friend's willingness to pass the popcorn: "Could you pass the popcorn?" These strategies may be useful for simple request that have actual responses,

but hostile questions have no desirable response. A hostile question, as it pertains to this research, is a question or statement posed by an organizational member that requests information from a change agent or organizational leader that is confrontational and may have no desirable response or leaves a negative impression. Politeness strategies can be used to refuse requests. That is, it should be possible to develop responses to hostile questions by politely refusing the request. This can be done with a strategy that refuses the request by suggesting that the request is based upon is inappropriate, faulty, or wrong premise (Gordon & Lakoff, 1971). Brown and Levinson (1987) suggest that when addressees of a request want to refuse the request, but also would like to lessen the social threat they generally adopt one of the following five strategies:

Existence: Deny that an item referred to in the request exists.

Agency: Deny that the address is the agent of the requested action.

Timing: Deny that the requested act is a future act.

Ability: Cite reasons for the addressee's inability to perform the requested act.

Desirability: Cite reasons that the requested action is actually not desired by the requestor.

Strategy 1, Existence

The existence strategy is designed to deny that an item referred to in the request exists. Suppose an organizational member questions his boss about a certain change initiative, "Why were other options not offered?" A polite way to respond, based on the existence strategy, would be to deny that there were any other options. For example, "There are no other options." In this response, the leader has denied that an item, other options, in the request exists.

Strategy 2, Agency

The agency strategy requires the change agent to deny that he or she is the agent of the requested act. This strategy is quite simple. That is, the response provided to the questioner implies that someone other than the addressee would be better equipped to handle the request. For instance, suppose an organizational member asks a change agent "How do I know the proposed change will work?" The change agent could simply respond by saying, "you don't." But, with the use of the agency strategy, he or she could avoid causing any social threat to the organizational member. A good response, based on the agency strategy is, "The work group that tested the change initiative can best explain the expected benefits." In this response, the change agent has denied that he or she is the agent of the member's request, and has named a work group as the appropriate agent.

Strategy 3, Timing

The timing strategy is designed to deny that a premise in the requested act is a future act. That is, the change agent must take the premise of the question and state that it has either already taken place or it will never take place. For example, an organizational member may ask, "Why are we changing a successful system?" One response, based on the timing strategy, would require the change agent to state that the system has already changed, thus denying that it is a future act. This particular response is only valid if the change initiative has actually taken place. Another response could deny that the current system will continue to be successful. This response would be valid in most instances.

Strategy 4, Ability

With the ability strategy, the responder would cite reasons for his or her inability to perform the requested act. That is, this strategy requires the addressee to offer the questioner reasons as to why he cannot respond to the request. For example, suppose an organizational member asks a change agent, "Why are you making me work harder?" The change agent could simply respond by saying "I'm not"; but by using the ability strategy he or she might be able to lessen the social threat with the member. A possible response would be, "I can't answer this now; we are conducting studies to determine the extent of the increased workload." In this response, the change agent cited the fact that he or she is waiting on data that are required to adequately answer the question.

Strategy 5, Desirability

The desirability response cites reasons that the requested act is actually not desired by the requestor. That is, in this strategy the addressee must cite reasons telling the questioner why he does not want to request what he requested. Suppose an organizational leader is telling his organization about a new change that must be implemented. An organizational member questions the leader, "Will there be layoffs associated with this change?" The leader's response, based on the desirability strategy, must now cite a reason why the organizational member does not desire an answer to his question. For example, "You do not need to be concerned with that, rather you should be concerned with the number of layoffs that will occur if the change is not implemented." In this response, the leader has told the organizational member why he should not desire a response to his question by telling him what his question should be.

Claiming that a premise in a request is inappropriate, faulty, or wrong is a well known, universal politeness strategy for denying that request (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Gordon & Lakoff, 1971; Levinson, 1983). These politeness strategies were recently used to develop responses to hostile questions that were encountered at environmental public meetings (Campbell, Parker et al., 1996).

Summary

Communicating change plays an important role in the success of a change initiative. The change implementation literature supports this, but fails to give any good direction on how to communicate, specifically with the hostile questions that may be encountered during organizational change. This study used five politeness response strategies based on Speech Act Theory to determine which strategies would be preferred over another. It also looked to determine if the type of hostile question asked would dictate the preferred response type. Chapter 2 outlines the method that was used to complete both phases of this study: identification of hostile questions and the identification of desirable question responses.

Chapter 2—Method

Phase 1—The Identification of Hostile Questions

Sample—Turnaround Change Agents

A total of 275 members of the Turnaround Management Association (TMA) were invited to participate in the first phase of this study. The TMA is a professional organization of individuals whose full-time job is to provide assistance to companies that face dire circumstances and are in need of immediate change (i.e., experiencing negative cash flow). Through this role, these association members serve as change agents in corporate turnarounds. Therefore, based on my understanding of the association's charter, I expected its members to have had extensive experience with all types of organizational changes. Moreover, I felt it was likely that these TMA members had dealt with changes that elicited negative responses, giving them unique experiences from which to identify a pool of hostile questions posed to organizational leaders.

Of the questionnaires sent, 32 were returned undelivered and 20 usable questionnaires were returned (8.2 % response rate when considering only those that I assume were delivered to the recipients). All but four of these TMA members indicated that they were consultants, but they indicated that they did their consulting work in a variety of functional areas such as human resource management, financial services, and general crisis management. However, financial consultant was the most frequently reported profession. On average, the mostly male group (n = 19) was 51.6 years old and had been a member of the TMA for 5.6 years. All but one of the participants (one participant indicated having only an Associate's Degree) had a Bachelor's degree;

however, 12 participants had a Master’s degree and one had gone on to complete a Doctorate.

While some might view the response rate as problematic, there were several reasons to suggest that the response rate was a relatively minor concern. First, several participants (*n* = 6) indicated that their involvement in corporate turnarounds was limited to the financial aspects of transformation efforts. Thus, these participants did not have the interactions with the changing organizations’ members, as had been anticipated, that were necessary to identify hostile questions that leaders encountered. Second, the data collected from the questionnaires were not used to make statistical inferences about the population of TMA members. Instead, these managers were purposefully selected to elicit feedback from a group that may have had a wide range of experiences with organizational changes. Thus, a sample representing the population of change managers was not necessary—it was more important to query those with experiences with organizational changes. Finally, this study was consistent with other studies that have collected information from pools of subject matter experts using open-ended questionnaires to inductively generate a list of factors influencing different organizational phenomena (Greenberg, 1986).

Procedure

Data that were collected from the TMA members was done so using open-ended questionnaires that were mailed to each member. The package forwarded included (a) a letter explaining the study; (b) a copy of the open-ended questionnaire; and (c) a self-addressed stamped envelope for the completed questionnaire. In order to maximize the response rate, each cover letter was personalized and closed with a promise to provide

interested participants with a summary of the findings. To further bolster response rates, an electronic mail message was sent to each participant approximately three weeks after the original questionnaire was mailed, encouraging the TMA members to complete the questionnaire. In case the copy of the questionnaire had been misplaced, another copy of the questionnaire was attached to the electronic mail along with a return e-mail address, postal mailing address, and fax number, providing the participants a number of ways to return their responses.

Questionnaire

A copy of the questionnaire used to collect data in this phase of the study is provided at Appendix A. Using a procedure that was similar to that reported by previous researchers (Isabella, 1990; Zand & Sorenson, 1975), the open-ended questionnaires were designed to elicit as much detail as possible about the participants' perceptions, reactions, observations, and thoughts in connection with an organizational change from their experience. Specifically, participants were encouraged to recall a major change effort that involved many divisions or sections of the organization that was being changed and required the organization to invest considerable time and resources to make the change (i.e., large scale efforts). In addition, they were asked to choose an incident where they were required to personally expend a considerable amount of time and effort (i.e., personally salient). Although recent changes were preferred, participants were urged to discuss any incident where they recalled specific details.

To get the participants started and to reinforce the frame of reference they selected, participants described (a) the change that was being implemented (e.g., what was involved and how many people were involved); (b) the general make up of the

organization that experienced the change (e.g., whether the organization was public or private); and (c) the outcome that was realized after the change was implemented. The questionnaire then shifted into our primary purpose, to gain an understanding of hostile questions that leadership encounters as they initiate large-scale change efforts. Therefore, participants were asked to list any hostile questions they encountered or witnessed during the organizational change initiative where a hostile question was defined as "a question or statement posed by an organizational member that requests information from a change agent or organizational leaders that is confrontational and may have no desirable response or leaves a negative impression." In addition, the participants were provided one example hostile question ("Why are you making my job harder with this change?") and asked them to provide the response that leadership gave to each question they presented and indicate whether or not the response was effective.

Analysis

Data collected in the open-ended questionnaire were systematically content analyzed to identify the thematic categories of hostile questions that leaders encounter. Content analysis is a common technique employed in the social sciences to draw inferences from textual data (Morris, 1994). Content analysis is executed by objectively selecting segments of written communications and systematically analyzing those segments. Management researchers have frequently used this technique to draw inferences from interview transcripts (Isabella, 1990) and analyze responses to open-ended questionnaires (Mossholder, Settoon et al., 1995).

Data extraction. Exactly 37 hostile questions were extracted from the open-ended questionnaires. All of the hostile questions that were conveyed were transcribed on index

cards. If the participant conveyed more than one thought in a single sentence, each was transcribed on a separate index card. Although some editing was done to reduce length, avoid repetition, and preserve confidentiality, verbatim statements were used to the greatest extent possible. Some examples of thought units selected from the questionnaires were:

> "My workload will increase and I do not have enough time in the day as it is. How do you propose I accomplish my old and new task?"
>
> "Why should we listen to your input/advice, you don't know anything about this organization or its history?"

Categorization. These questions were reviewed and like questions were combined. I hypothesized that hostile questions would focus on specific issues. After a cursory look at the questions I was led to a pre-existing set of categories. Each of the questions could be placed in the following categories: discrepancy, appropriateness, self-efficacy, principal support, and personal valence. Armenakis, Harris, and Field (1999) briefly describe how each these five message components can help to provide the answer to their five key questions about change. Discrepancy refers to information regarding the need for change as reflected in the discrepancy between the current and an ideal state in the organization. The appropriateness component can be defined by the suitability of the action being taken to correct the discrepancy. The efficacy component deals with the ability of the organization or the person to successfully implement the change. Principal support can be described as the degree in which the formal and informal leaders are committed to the successful implementation and

institutionalization of the change. The last component, personal valence, is defined as the need for knowledge of the intrinsic and extrinsic benefits of the change.

Validation. As noted, the researcher and a faculty member first categorized all of the statements independently. When disagreements occurred, the statements were jointly discussed, and a consensus was reached as to the appropriate category. To ensure the validity of the categorization done by the researcher and the faculty member, twelve independent judges, who were graduate students in systems and engineering management programs, read the hostile questions and independently categorized each of them using the categories previously defined (the instrument that was used to complete this task is provided at Appendix B). The judges were introduced to the categorization scheme through a brief training session. This training session included a discussion of the following: (a) the project; (b) the definition of each category; and (c) the categorization of five hostile questions that were representative of those that had been extracted from the interviews. Additionally, the judges were asked to practice categorizing a number of hostile questions independently which was followed by a discussion of the results. Finally, the judges independently coded 31 questions (i.e., 100% of the statements extracted minus the examples), and these results were compared to the coding done by the interview team.

Phase 2—The Identification of Desirable Question Responses

Sample

The sample invited to participate in this phase of the study (*n* = 110) was a group of military officers that were graduate students studying communications, engineering, and finance. All have experienced change and have been directed to make behavioral and procedural changes as their organizations have undergone transformation. That is, these participants were at levels of the organization typically that ask hostile questions and receive the responses to those questions rather than those delivering the responses (Campbell, Follender et al., 1998). To ensure that an appropriate group of individuals participated, factors such as age, gender, education, and organizational position was considered. Age was measured as a continuous variable (in years) where participants completed an open-ended item. Gender was a categorical variable coded as a 0 = *female* or 1 = *male*. Participants indicated education level by reporting the highest level of education that they had attained (e.g., 1 = *some high school*; 2 = *high school diploma*; 3 = *associate's degree*; 4 = *bachelor's degree*; 5 = *master's degree*; 6 = *doctorate degree*; and 7 = *other.* On average, the mostly male group (*n* = 85) was 31.3 years old and had been a member of their organization for 5.8 years. All of the participants had a Bachelor's degree; however, 14 participants had a Master's degree.

Organizational position variables include tenure, profession, and managerial level. First, participants indicated how long they had worked for the organization. Profession was determined by asking the participants to describe their primary career field or profession (e.g., engineer, medical assistant, doctor, clerk, and machinist). Given that managers may have greater access to information and more opportunities to participate in

the implementation of the change, managerial level was measured. First, it was measured with one item that simply asked whether the participant supervised employees (*no* = 0 or *yes* =1). Next, participants reported the number of levels separating their position from that of the organization's most senior leader (Aquino, Grover et al., 1999).

Questionnaire

Using the list of questions generated in Phase I, a group of ten hostile questions was selected, two from each of the five categories of questions. For each of these questions, I developed potential responses to the hostile questions based on the five strategies of Speech Act Theory (i.e., existence, agency, timing, ability, and desirability). Table 2 shows an example question along with the responses that were included in the instrument. Internal consistency in the responses was ensured several ways. First, the

Table 2. Example hostile questions and responses using each speech act theory strategy

Hostile Question (Valence): If we make this change, you are making my job harder. Why are you doing this to me?	
Response Strategy	Response
Existence	As we make this change, your job will not become more difficult.
Agency	The analyst will study jobs to ensure your positions aren't overloaded.
Timing	We have already identified low priority work that will be postponed as we transition.
Ability	This change initiative is required to help use deal with a surge of requirements that are expected.
Desirability	This change is a better option because it will help you accomplish more when completely implemented.

responses based on a particular strategy had the same explicit focus. For example, the responses based on agency strategy (e.g., Deny that you are the agent for replying with the request) always had an agent named and placed in the same position within the sentence as all other responses based on this strategy. For instance, one response said, "The regional manger has dictated that all firms must comply with this change initiative." Another had the agent in the same place; and a response read, "The corporate office has indicated that bonuses may be given as a reward if we quickly implement this change initiative." Clearly, the agent has been placed in the front of both of these responses.

In addition to ensuring consistent response focus, all responses will be developed so that the quantity and quality of information in all responses is held relatively constant. That is, all responses were developed to be approximately the same length with similar levels of complexity.

As Campbell, Follender, and Shane (1998) did in their study, a computerized, random number generator was used to pair each one of the 5 potential responses against every other potential response for each of the hostile questions, resulting in a total of 100 test items on the instrument (the complete instrument is provided in Appendix C) that was presented to the participants. By using a random number generator, I was able to guard against potential sources of research bias, specifically order effects.

Analysis

Similar to the method used by Campbell, Follender, and Shane (1998), participants for the study were advised of their rights before being presented with the 100-item survey. The method of paired comparison (Woodworth & Schlosberg, 1954) was used to produce a ranking of judgments. That is, a frequency count of the

participants' answers for a given test item was attained, which resulted in the determination of a preferred response strategy for that question. Next, the resulting response strategy for all items that paired a given set of responses was recorded. With this analysis, it was possible to determine which of the response strategies was most often preferred over the other by the participants. A ranking of preference was then calculated by counting all preferences for a response strategy resulting in a choice score for that response.

Chapter 3—Results

Phase I

Phase I of the research effort had three specific objectives. The first objective was to develop a list of potential hostile questions that leaders could encounter during organizational change. Secondly, these questions were analyzed, and like questions were combined. After the groupings were validated, ten were selected and responses were developed for each of these ten to be in phase II of the study. These responses were developed based on Speech Act Theory's five politeness responses strategies; that is, a responses based on each strategy was developed for each of the ten questions.

Identification of Questions and Question Categorization

Data collected in the open-ended questionnaire were systematically content analyzed to identify the thematic categories of hostile questions that leaders encounter. If the participant conveyed more than one thought in a single sentence, each was transcribed. Although some editing was done to reduce length, avoid repetition, and preserve confidentiality, verbatim statements were used to the greatest extent possible. Exactly 37 hostile questions were extracted from the open-ended questionnaires. These questions were reviewed and like questions were combined. I hypothesized that hostile questions would focus on specific issues. After a cursory look at the questions I was led to a pre-existing set of categories. Each of the questions could be placed in the following categories: discrepancy, appropriateness, self-efficacy, principal support, and personal valence (Table 3). Armenakis, Harris, and Feild (1999) briefly describe how each these five message components can help to provide the answer to their five key questions about change. Discrepancy refers to information regarding the need for change as reflected in

the discrepancy between the current and an ideal state of the organization. The appropriateness component can be defined by the suitability of the action being taken to correct the discrepancy. The efficacy component deals with the ability of the organization or the person, who is being asked to change, to successfully implement the change. Principal support can be described as the degree in which the formal and informal leaders are committed to the successful implementation and institutionalization of the change. The last component, personal valence, is defined as the need for knowledge of the intrinsic and extrinsic benefits of the change.

Table 3. Question Categories and Definitions

Category	Definition
Discrepancy	Extent to which one feels that there are legitimate reasons for the organization to make some change (i.e., a general need for change).
Appropriateness	Extent to which one feels that the specific strategy or change initiative will produce the desired results (i.e., the change will benefit the organization).
Efficacy	Extent to which one feels that he or she has the skills (or will be provided the skills through training) and is able to execute the tasks and activities associated with the specific strategy or change initiative (i.e., the belief organizational members can actually do what is asked).
Principal Support	Extent to which one feels the change agents (i.e. organizational leadership or consultants) are committed and qualified to successfully develop a specific strategy or change initiative and guide its implementation.
Personal Valence	Extent to which one feels that he or she will receive intrinsic or extrinsic benefits from the implementation of the specific strategy or change initiative.

For the purpose of this research, the categorical definitions were slightly modified in an effort to make them compatible and understandable to our sample. For example, the principal support definition was altered to include consultants as change agents, and also to include the qualifications of the change agent. It was important to include consultants in the definition because the hostile questions came from a predominantly consultant sample.

Validation of Question Categorization

A faculty member and I independently categorized all of the questions that were extracted. When disagreements occurred, the statements were jointly discussed, and a consensus was reached as to the appropriate category. To ensure the validity of the categorization done by the researcher and the faculty member, twelve independent judges who were graduate students in systems and engineering management program read the hostile questions and independently categorized each of them using the categories previously defined (the instrument that was used to complete this task is provided at Appendix B). Finally, the judges independently coded 31 questions (i.e., 100% of the statements extracted minus the examples), and these results were compared to the coding done by the faculty member and myself.

Table 4 shows how the faculty member and I categorized the questions, along with the percent agreement of the independent judges. The overall agreement was 75%. Many questions had over 80% agreement, but a few questions were close to 40%. For example, item 19, "If you claim this change is going to work, why can't you stop the negative rumors," had a 41.67% agreement with the researcher's categorization (appropriateness). A closer look at the validation results showed that a third of the

Table 4. Validation Survey

Question Type and Corresponding Questions from Validation Survey (Numbers reflect the questionnaire item number)	*Percent Agreement*
Discrepancy refers to the extent to which one feels that there are legitimate reasons for the organization to make some change (i.e., a general need for change).	
7. Why are you making this change now?	75.00%
*10. What is the reason for this proposed change?	83.33%
16. We have been doing it this way for a long time; why are you saying I need to change the way I do my job?	66.67%
*20. Why are we changing a successful system?	75.00%
Appropriateness refers to the extent to which one feels that the specific strategy or change initiative will produce the desired results (i.e., the change will benefit the organization).	
*8. Why were other options not offered?	83.33%
19. If you claim this change is going to work, why can't you stop the negative rumors?	41.67%
*24. How do I know the proposed change will work?	100.00%
27. Do you really believe this change will ever work?	66.67%
Efficacy refers to the extent to which one feels that he or she has the skills (or will be provided the skills through training) and is able to execute the tasks and activities associated with the specific strategy or change initiative (i.e., the belief organizational members can actually do what is asked).	
*22. How can we serve all these patients and do all this paperwork in a normal 40-hour week?	100.00%
*25. Do we have the resources - financial, manpower, skills and systems - to make it work?	83.33%
31. My workload will increase and I do not have enough time in the day as it is. How do you propose I accomplish my old and new task?	66.67%
Principal support refers to the extent to which one feels the change agents (i.e. organizational leadership or consultants) are committed and qualified to successfully develop a specific strategy or change initiative and guide its implementation.	
**1. What can you do that others have not been able to do to save this organization?	91.67%
4. Why in the hell should we listen to anything these bastards have to say?	58.33%
**6. Why should we listen to your input/advice, you don't know anything about this organization or its history?	91.67%
**11. What makes you an authority for the changes proposed or their need/requirement(s)?	91.67%
13. The prior owners lied to us, what makes you think new owners will fix this problem?	58.33%
14. Did you buy the company just so you can sell the company and make "a lot of money"?	50.00%
15. Will the new owners invest money for improvements?	33.33%
17. Do you think you know this property better than we do?	91.67%
18. What is really going on with the senior leader?	91.67%
*23. What makes you think you know enough about our company to lead us through this effort?	100.00%
28. Who is responsible for developing this proposed change?	75.00%
30. Who will be held accountable when this change fails?	41.67%

Table 4. Validation Survey

Question Type and Corresponding Questions from Validation Survey (Numbers reflect the questionnaire item number)		*Percent Agreement*
Personal valence refers to the extent to which one feels that he or she will receive intrinsic or extrinsic benefits from the implementation of the specific strategy or change initiative.		
2.	Why should we help an organization that alienated us in the past?	75.00%
3.	Why shouldn't we be looking for other employment; we have not had a raise in a long time.	83.33%
5.	Why should long-term employees accept wage and benefit reductions used in part, to fund a bunch of external consultants?	50.00%
9.	Why are you (referring to change agent) doing this to me?	58.33%
12.	We (the employees) have made considerable concessions in the past. If we make this change, will you give something back to us?	100.00%
*21.	If we adopt this change, will there be layoffs?	100.00%
*26.	Why are we being asked to work harder?	41.67%
29.	Why are you cutting my pay?	100.00%

Note. N=12. Percent agreement represents the percentage of participants that classified the questions as intended.
*Represents the question that was pulled from the validation to be included in the Phase II survey.
**These three items were encompassed by one of the examples given in the validation instrument and therefore were combined by using only the example question in the Phase II survey.

respondents chose the principal support category. This seemed reasonable because the question appeared to include two ideas. The first part of the question, the part that caused the researchers to classify it as they did, deals with the appropriateness of the change. The second part of the question, which I assumed caused the low agreement, refers directly to the change agent or leader. This may have led some respondents to select the principal support category.

Two questions from each category were selected for the questionnaire used in the second phase of the study. The questions with the highest percent agreement were used with only one exception. In the personal valence category, question 26 (41.67% agreement), “Why are we being asked to work harder?” was selected because the other

responses in this category were very similar to one another (they were all monetary in nature). Several questions were slightly reworded in an effort to generalize them to fit any organization versus being specific to a single organization. For example, one question asked (item #22), "How can we serve all these patients and do all this paperwork in a normal 40-hour week?" This item obviously referred to the medical career field. Therefore, it was replaced with, "How can we serve all our customers and do all the extra work associated with the change?"

Developing Responses to Questions

For each of the questions selected, potential responses to the hostile questions were developed using the five politeness strategies (i.e., existence, agency, timing, ability, and desirability) based on Speech Act Theory. These responses are presented in Appendix C (the complete survey instrument). Table 5 shows an example question along with the responses that were included in the instrument.

Table 5. Example hostile question and responses using each politeness strategy

Hostile Question (Discrepancy): What is the reason for this proposed change?	
Response Strategy	Response
Existence	Change is necessary for continued success.
Agency	The internal work group that studied the change can best explain the specific reasons for the change.
Timing	This is an important initiative--if we don't change, we will not continue to be successful.
Ability	I am not entitled to release that information at this time; however, a detailed explanation will be provided soon.
Desirability	It would take a considerable amount of your time to explain all of the reasons for this change.

Internal consistency in the responses was ensured several ways. First, the responses based on a particular strategy had the same explicit focus. For example, the responses based on agency strategy (i.e., Deny that you are the agent for replying with the request) always had an agent named and placed in the same position within the sentence as all other responses based on this strategy. For instance, the agency response for "What is the reason for this proposed change?" is "The internal work group that studied the change can best explain the specific reasons for the change." Another would have the agent in the same place; for example the question "How do I know the proposed change will work?" had the agency response "The work group that tested the change can best explain the expected benefits." Clearly, the agent was placed in the front of both of these responses.

In addition to ensuring consistent response focus, all responses were developed so that the quantity and quality of information in all responses was held relatively constant. That is, all responses were developed to be approximately the same length with similar levels of complexity. These responses were validated by two independent judges that were instructed to determine the relative fairness of one response to another in a given category.

Phase II

In the second phase of the study, change targets preferred responses were selected. The method of paired comparison (Woodworth & Schlosberg, 1954) was used to determine these preferences. That is, a frequency count of the participants' answers for a given test item was attained, which resulted in the determination of a preferred response strategy for that question. Next, the resulting response strategy for all items that

paired a given set of responses was recorded. With this analysis, it was possible to determine which of the response strategies was most often preferred over the other by the participants. A ranking of preference was then be calculated by counting all preferences for a response strategy resulting in a choice score for that response.

Choice Score Rankings

The overall results of the participant's judgments are summarized in Table 6. The response strategies (e.g., agency, existence, timing, ability, and desirability) are listed on the left side of the table as well as the top of the table as columns. The table can be read by looking at the strategy on the left side of the table and reading across to determine the number of times that a particular strategy was preferred over the strategy listed in that column. There were 110 responses for the survey and each respondent could choose a given response strategy over another response strategy a maximum of ten times. That is, there were ten different questions on the instrument. The ability response strategy is paired against the existence response strategy for each question which results in a maximum of ten times ability could be preferred over existence. This resulted in an 1100 as a maximum possible score for a given strategy. For example, the existence response strategy was preferred 833 (out of a perfect score of 1100) times over the ability response strategy. The choice score for a given strategy is then calculated by adding the comparison scores for a given strategy versus each of the other strategies, thus creating a maximum possible choice score of 4400 (each strategy is compared with the other four strategies; therefore, 4*1100 = 4400). Again, looking at the existence strategy, the sum of all the comparison scores (768, 350,833,838) add up to a combined choice score of

2789. The choice scores were then ranked highest to lowest to determine the overall preference ranking of a particular response strategy.

Table 6. Choice Score and Strategy Rankings for Questions Overall

			Overall				
Strategy	Existence	Agency	Timing	Ability	Desirability	Choice Score[b]	Ranking[c]
Existence	--	768[a]	350	833	838	2789	2
Agency	332	--	195	737	711	1975	3
Timing	750	905	--	977	932	3564	1
Ability	267	363	123	--	518	1271	5
Desirability	262	389	168	582	--	1401	4

Note. [a] As an example, the existence strategy was preferred 768 times (out of 1100) over the agency strategy.
[b] This results in the strategy having a maximum possible choice score of 4400 (1100 * four other strategies).
[c] The ranking is determined by the choice score (highest choice score received a ranking of one)

The overall rankings and the corresponding choice scores show that the timing and existence response strategies were preferred over the other strategies. Of these, the timing strategy was typically preferred over all others. This is demonstrated by the high scores it received when compared to each of the other four strategies. For example, the timing strategy was preferred 977 times out of a possible 1100 (89%) when paired with the ability response. On the other hand, desirability and ability clearly demonstrated they were not preferred over the other three strategies. The ability strategy was only selected 1271 times out of a possible 4400, and almost half (518) of these selections came when it was compared to desirability (choice score of 1401). To provide further insight into the participant's preferences and to determine if any category of hostile question showed

different preferences for response strategies, Tables 7-11 show the choice score and rankings by category of question.

These tables are very similar to Table 6. Each table represents one of the five question categories: discrepancy, principal support, personal valence, efficacy, and appropriateness. Each category had two representative questions on the survey instrument and had unique responses based on each of the five response strategies. Each question appeared on the survey instrument 10 times so that each response strategy could be paired with the other four strategies. The given response strategy was paired only once with each of the other response strategies for each question. Therefore, a given response strategy could only be preferred over another response strategy a total of ten times per respondent which is represented by the maximum possible preference score of 220. A given response strategy could be chosen a maximum of four times for any one of ten questions in the instrument (i.e., if it were chosen over each of the other four strategies for a given question). Thus, with two questions in each category, a response strategy could be picked a maximum of eight times per respondent for each category. This resulted in a maximum possible choice score of 880 for a response strategy for a given category of question.

Discrepancy. The two questions in the discrepancy category were: "What is the reason for this proposed change?" and "Why are we changing a successful system?" The same patterns reported in the overall assessment of the response strategies existed for discrepancy questions (Table 7). The timing and existence strategies were clearly preferred over the other three strategies. The ability and desirability strategies both had relatively low choice scores, while the agency strategy was ranked in the middle of the

five strategies. Timing is the most preferred strategy when compared to any of the other four strategies which was demonstrated by the 793 out of 880 (90%) choice score. Ability's choice score of 197 was largely due to the 121 times it was preferred over desirability. Likewise, desirability's choice score of 148 was mostly made up of the 99 times it was preferred over ability.

Table 7. Choice Score and Strategy Rankings for Questions in the Discrepancy Category

	Discrepancy						
Strategy	Existence	Agency	Timing	Ability	Desirability	Choice Score [b]	Ranking [c]
Existence	--	173[a]	37	199	203	612	2
Agency	47	--	31	177	195	450	3
Timing	183	189	--	208	213	793	1
Ability	21	43	12	--	121	197	4
Desirability	17	25	7	99	--	148	5

Note. [a] As an example, the existence strategy was preferred 173 times (out of 220) over the agency strategy.
[b] This results in the strategy having a maximum possible choice score of 880 (220 * four other strategies).
[c] The ranking is determined by the choice score (highest choice score received a ranking of one)

Principal Support. "What makes you think you know enough about our day-to-day work to lead us through this effort?" and "Why did we go 'outside' for the answers to the changes needed?" were the questions used in the principal support category. Again, the results in this category (Table 8) were very similar to the overall results. The timing and existence strategies are ranked one and two, respectively, and the agency strategy was ranked in the middle. The bottom two response strategies were desirability and ability, with the large majority of their choice scores coming from their pairings with one another. Timing was the most preferred strategy with a total choice score of 716.

Table 8. Choice Score and Strategy Rankings for Questions in the Principal Support Category

Principal Support							
Strategy	Existence	Agency	Timing	Ability	Desirability	Choice Score [b]	Ranking [c]
Existence	--	165[a]	92	196	168	621	2
Agency	55	--	26	182	136	399	3
Timing	128	194	--	209	185	716	1
Ability	24	38	11	--	61	134	5
Desirability	52	84	35	159	--	330	4

Note. [a] As an example, the existence strategy was preferred 165 times (out of 220) over the agency strategy.
[b] This results in the strategy having a maximum possible choice score of 880 (220 * four other strategies).
[c] The ranking is determined by the choice score (highest choice score received a ranking of one)

Personal Valence. The two questions that represented the personal valence category were: "If we adopt this change, will there be downsizing?" and "Why are you making me work harder?" The timing, existence, and agency strategies were once again ranked one through three, respectively. The bottom two response strategies also remained desirability and ability for this type of hostile question. For the most part, this category followed the same pattern as the previous two; however, timing was not the most preferred strategy over each of the other four. That is, when the four response strategies were compared to the desirability response strategy, the existence response strategy was selected 184 times versus timing which was selected 181 times (Table 9). While this might appear quite insignificant, it did suggest that the existence strategy, which is the second most preferred strategy overall, was an effective alternate to the timing strategy. This is further illustrated by the close choice scores of the two strategies (660 and 587).

Table 9. Choice Score and Strategy Rankings for Questions in the Personal Valence Category

Personal Valence							
Strategy	Existence	Agency	Timing	Ability	Desirability	Choice Score [b]	Ranking [c]
Existence	--	151 [a]	82	170	184	587	2
Agency	69	--	59	129	162	419	3
Timing	138	161	--	180	181	660	1
Ability	50	91	40	--	151	332	4
Desirability	36	58	39	69	--	202	5

Note. [a] As an example, the existence strategy was preferred 151 times (out of 220) over the agency strategy.
[b] This results in the strategy having a maximum possible choice score of 880 (220 * four other strategies).
[c] The ranking is determined by the choice score (highest choice score received a ranking of one)

Efficacy. "How can we serve all our customers and do all the extra work associated with the change?" and "Do we have the resources - financial, manpower, and systems - to make it work?" were the two questions used to represent the efficacy category. The discrepancy, principal support, and person valence categories showed similar preferences for response strategies. In fact, the only difference was within the principal support category where desirability was ranked above ability. It is important to note that this difference occurred in the fourth and fifth ranked response strategies, and that the top three response strategies remained the same for all three categories. The efficacy type question (Table 10) proved to be slightly different than the other three types of hostile questions. Existence, not timing, was the most preferred response strategy, but the choice scores between the two differed by only 20. The existence strategy was preferred over the timing strategy when compared to both agency (186 versus 175) and desirability (178 versus 164). Desirability ranked third, finishing slightly in front of the agency strategy. Ability was the least preferred strategy for the efficacy category.

Table 10. Choice Score and Strategy Rankings for Questions in the Efficacy Category

Strategy	Existence	Agency	Timing	Ability	Desirability	Choice Score [b]	Ranking [c]
				Efficacy			
Existence	--	186 [a]	110	192	178	666	1
Agency	34	--	45	122	111	312	4
Timing	110	175	--	197	164	646	2
Ability	28	98	23	--	86	235	5
Desirability	42	109	56	134	--	341	3

Note. [a] As an example, the existence strategy was preferred 186 times (out of 220) over the agency strategy.
[b] This results in the strategy having a maximum possible choice score of 880 (220 * four other strategies).
[c] The ranking is determined by the choice score (highest choice score received a ranking of one)

Appropriateness. The two questions in the discrepancy category were: "How do I know the proposed change will work?" and "Why were other options not offered?" The appropriateness category showed a considerable difference from the other four categories. The timing strategy was clearly the most preferred strategy, but the existence strategy ranked last (Table 11).

Table 11. Choice Score and Strategy Rankings for Questions in the Appropriateness Category

Strategy	Existence	Agency	Timing	Ability	Desirability	Choice Score [b]	Ranking [c]
				Appropriateness			
Existence	--	93 [a]	29	76	105	303	5
Agency	127	--	34	127	107	395	2
Timing	191	186	--	183	189	749	1
Ability	144	93	37	--	99	373	4
Desirability	115	113	31	121	--	380	3

Note. [a] As an example, the existence strategy was preferred 186 times (out of 220) over the agency strategy.
[b] This results in the strategy having a maximum possible choice score of 880 (220 * four other strategies).
[c] The ranking is determined by the choice score (highest choice score received a ranking of one)

All of the response strategies, with the exception of timing, had choice scores in the three hundreds. Agency, ability, and desirability were closely grouped, while existence was a distant fifth. The biggest surprise with these types of questions was that respondents considered existence as the least preferred strategy after it was considered the second most preferred strategy for all of the other types of questions.

Response Preference by Question

To take a closer look inside each of the categories of questions, Table 12 shows the response preference for each of the ten questions. The existence strategy, which placed last with the appropriateness type of question, only performed poorly on question four ("Why were other option not offered"). A closer look at the question and response revealed that the response ("There are no other options") may have been perceived as negative or even hostile. The existence strategy ranked first or second for all of the other questions, which also suggested there may be a problem with the response generated for question four. The timing strategy ranked first for all but three of the questions. It ranked second for each of these three questions and clearly showed that it is the most preferred response strategy. Agency ranked third for seven questions, and fourth for the remaining three questions. The ability and desirability strategy consistently scored low resulting in mostly fourth or fifth place rankings. However, they both received second place rankings for question four, which is explained by the low acceptance of the existence strategy response.

Table 12. Strategy Rankings by Question

		Ranking				
		Existence	Agency	Timing	Ability	Desirability
Discrepancy	1. What is the reason for this proposed change?	2	3	1	4	5
	2. Why are we changing a successful system?	2	3	1	5	4
Appropriateness	3. How do I know the proposed change will work?	2	3	1	5	4
	4. Why were other options not offered?	5	4	1	2	2
Efficacy	5. How can we serve all our customers and do all the extra work associated with the change?	1	4	2	5	3
	6. Do we have the resources - financial, manpower, and systems - to make it work?	2	3	1	4	5
Principal Support	7. What makes you think you know enough about our day-to-day work to lead us through this effort?	2	3	1	5	4
	8. Why did we go "outside" for the answers to the changes needed?	1	3	2	5	4
Personal Valence	9. If we adopt this change, will there be downsizing?	1	4	2	3	5
	10. Why are you making me work harder?	2	3	1	4	5

Summary of Results

The list of hostile questions used for the study came from a relatively small sample. However, this sample of questions was generated by experts in the area of organizational change. Even with the limited number of responses, the hostile questions began to become redundant from one respondent to the next. Also, there were enough questions received so that each predetermined question category (e.g., discrepancy, appropriateness, efficacy, principal support, and personal valence) had at least three representative questions to be used in the validation instrument. The categorization validation was very successful (75% agreement). From the validation instrument, the questions categorized with the best respondent agreement were selected (with few exceptions) to be used in the second phase of the study. Once two questions had been selected to represent each of the five categories, responses based on the five politeness strategies were generated.

Phase two of this study focused on determining the response strategy preference for five different types of organizational change hostile questions. Whether looking at the overall rankings, the categorical rankings, or the individual question rankings, the timing strategy was consistently the most preferred response strategy. The existence strategy was a close second with the exception of question four (Table 12). The agency strategy appeared to be preferred over desirability and ability. Desirability and ability responses traded for fourth and fifth place rankings, and were clearly the least desirable responses.

Chapter 4—Discussion

Like all organizations, the Department of Defense (DoD) is continually changing. The current initiative, termed *transformation*, is a comprehensive effort aimed at restructuring the entire DoD. "The U.S. military is pursuing not a single transformation, but a host of transformations including precision, surveillance, networked communications, robotics and information processing. When these transformations come together, the resulting synergy could produce a revolutionary level of improvement in the ability of U.S. joint forces to dominate the battle space. The convergence of military transformations within our land, air, sea, space and information forces could allow the development of new concepts of operations that will further exploit our ability to conduct military actions in a parallel rather than a sequential manner" (Wolfowitz, 2002). Change occurs everywhere, and its importance is unquestionable.

Communicating is an essential element to successful change implementation. Organizational development theorists consider open communication channels fundamental (Scheirer, 1981). Empirical research supports Schierer's claim that the flow of information is crucial to organizational change (Baldridge & Burnham, 1975). Covin and Kilmann (1990) found that a high degree of communication had very positive impact on large scale change programs. They also reported that poor communication (i.e., failure to share information or to inform people adequately of what changes are necessary and why they are necessary) had a highly negative impact on change implementation. Nelson, Cooper and Jackson (1995) found that lack of communication was inversely related to job satisfaction over time through an organizational change. Daly and Geyer (1994) found information that explained change was related to perceptions of fairness

regarding change and subsequent decisions to stay in the organization after a change was implemented.

Despite the agreement among the studies, there is no evidence to suggest what specific information should be communicated or how it should be communicated. Thus, the studies are lacking some level of specificity. This study attempted to address a small part of the communication area; specifically, it looked at the hostile questions leaders encounter during organizational change. Hostile questions were obtained by surveying experts in the field of organizational change. Specifically, members of the Turnaround Management Association were asked to list any hostile questions they encountered or witnessed during their involvement with an organizational change. These questions were then grouped into one of five message categories. Five politeness response strategies, based on Speech Act Theory were used to develop responses to ten hostile questions. These politeness strategies enable a leader to politely refuse answering a question by denying a premise in the question. Phase two of this study focused on determining the response strategy preference for five different types of organizational change hostile questions. The 100 item instrument was developed by taking the ten hostile questions, two from each message category, and generating a response based on each of the politeness response strategies. The method of paired comparison (Woodworth & Schlosberg, 1954) was used to produce a ranking of judgments. That is, a frequency count of the participants' answers for a given test item was attained, which resulted in the determination of a preferred response strategy for that question. Whether looking at the overall rankings, the categorical rankings, or the individual question rankings, the timing strategy was consistently the most preferred response strategy. The existence strategy

was a close second with the exception of question four. The agency strategy appeared to be preferred over desirability and ability. Desirability and ability responses traded for fourth and fifth place rankings, and were clearly the least desirable responses.

Implications

This study was incredibly important to practitioners. The emotional responses to most organizational changes can challenge the communication skills of organizational leaders as they try to answer the questions and discuss the change with the members of their organizations. Specifically, leaders can encounter hostile questions from employees attending group meetings. For instance, during a recent meeting that announced the conversion to a new information management system, the first question asked was, "When are you going to stop making my job harder with these changes?" Such hostile questions can end the interactive, support-building dialog that the meeting is designed to foster by threatening the positive perception that organizational members have of the leader, the organization, and the change. When confronted with these situations, the organization's senior leader becomes a crisis manager trying to convey the positive ideas behind the proposed change while simultaneously responding to the concerns of the questioning employee.

Given the implications that these hostile questions can have, leaders should be ready to deal with such situations when encountered. Unfortunately, the current guidance available to organizational leaders who encounter hostile questions during group meetings has at least two major shortcomings: (a) the prescriptions that describe ways of dealing with hostile questions (e.g., don't "take the bait" or explain why the question can't be answered) are too vague to judge how adequately the responses satisfy the

questioner while maintaining a positive, open communication environment, and (b) the examples of effective responses (e.g., “The new management information system will reduce processing time and allow each of you to more effectively deal with customers’ concerns.”) are to specific, allowing leaders to develop responses to idiosyncratic questions only.

This research effort was designed to help leaders better handle hostile questions they face during change. Specifically, speech act theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969) outlines five theoretically grounded and empirically tested question-response strategies that were used to develop effective question responses. This research tells the leader what type of hostile questions to expect; it should be able to be grouped into one of the five message categories. The research also provides general rules or guidance about the content of the responses that can be used to respond to these hostile questions. The research effort determined change targets’ (i.e., membership of an organization) preferences in reference to desired responses to hostile questions. This information can be used by leaders as a guide as they initiate and implement change.

Limitations

Several limitations of this study should be noted. One set of limitations may be due to the method used to collect phase I data, an open ended questionnaire. While these questionnaires were necessary in this study for one primary reason, because the information provided was unlikely to be known any other way, the response rate was low. The questionnaire was designed to elicit as much detail as possible about the participant’s perceptions, reactions, observations, and thoughts in connection with an organizational

change from their experience. The low response rate was most likely due to the amount of time required to complete the instrument.

While some might view the response rate as problematic, there were several reasons to suggest that the response rate was a relatively minor concern. First, several participants (n = 6) indicated that their involvement in corporate turnarounds was limited to the financial aspects of transformation efforts. Thus, these participants did not have the interactions with the changing organizations' members, as had been anticipated, that were necessary to identify hostile questions that leaders encountered. Second, the data collected from the questionnaires were not used to make statistical inferences about the population of TMA members. Instead, these managers were purposefully selected to elicit feedback from a group that may have had a wide range of experiences with organizational changes. Thus, a sample representing the population of change managers was not necessary—it was more important to query those with experiences with organizational changes. Finally, this study was consistent with other studies that have collected information from pools of subject matter experts using open-ended questionnaires to inductively generate a list of factors influencing different organizational phenomena (Greenberg, 1986).

Another major set of limitations involved the sample used in the second phase of the study. First, the participants of the study were all employees of the same organization. Secondly, they were all military employees. A cross reference of different organization could provide useful data and military members may be more apt to embrace a change initiative simply because they were told to do so. However, these individuals spanned several different career fields from within the organization. Another

limitation with this sample is that it only represented an employee preference for responses to hostile questions. It would be interesting to compare these preferences to leader or consultant preferences.

The last limitation was neglecting to validate the extent to which the responses developed by the researcher actually represented the strategy they were designed upon. Similar to the method used to validate the question categorization, I should have validated to make sure the generated responses matched their respective politeness strategy. While these responses were looked at by three instructors, they were not truly tested.

Future Research

As suggested by the limitations, this research is by no means capable of being a definitive guide for leaders to use to respond to hostile questions. It would be beneficial to survey more consultants and leaders to ensure a complete list of hostile questions was generated. I also believe that more employee samples from different organizations would help to validate the preferences discovered with this sample. In addition to these samples, a sample of leaders and consultants would help to compare the preferences generated by employees to that of their leaders. A web based questionnaire was generated for this research effort and could be used to obtain more data. The responses need to be validated to ensure they actually represent the strategy they were based on. Finally, it would be beneficial to generate some statistical data that measures the significance of the variation in choice scores of the various politeness strategies.

Summary

This research is only a small step in understanding how to communicate during times of organizational change. This research suggests that leaders can prepare for certain types of questions when communicating change. It also suggests that five politeness response strategies can be used to provide answers to these questions. This tool helps to address some of the shortcoming in the current literature; the prescriptions that describe ways of dealing with hostile questions are too vague to judge how adequately the responses satisfy the questioner while maintaining a positive, open communication environment, and the examples of effective responses are to specific, allowing leaders to develop responses to idiosyncratic questions only.

Appendix A

U.S. AIR FORCE

Air Force Institute of Technology

Organizational Change Study

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Integrity - Service - Excellence

HOSTILE QUESTIONS QUESTIONNAIRE

A STUDY OF STRATEGIES LEADERS SHOULD USE TO RESPOND TO HOSTILE QUESTIONS REGARDING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES

PURPOSE

Many organizational changes have far-reaching ramifications. They can affect policies, procedures, employees' jobs, and relationships. As a member of the Turnaround Management Association, you help implement changes within organizations that are faced with dire circumstances and need to change immediately—we imagine many of the changes are emotional for the organizational members, eliciting a number of questions. The purpose of this survey is to study organizational change to identify the questions that leaders face during these emotional changes, and ultimately provide leaders tools to effectively respond.

TASK

IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE YOU WILL BE ASKED TO RECALL AND DESCRIBE ONE INCIDENT WHEN YOUR SERVICES WERE REQUESTED TO HELP IMPLEMENT A CONTENTIOUS OR EMOTIONAL ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE.

Please consider one change that involved a number of divisions or sections of the organization where the change occurred and where you personally had to expend a considerable amount of effort. We would prefer that you choose a recent change; however, if you can **CLEARLY RECALL THE DETAILS**, feel free to discuss a particularly important change that you were involved in sometime ago.

On the basis of the responses we have gotten in the past, we are sure that any change incident you choose to describe will be exactly what we are looking for. Since you will be describing a unique incident that happened in your life, there are no "correct" answers to the questions. It is important that you give honest and frank responses.

You will notice that no examples are given to guide you in answering the questions. Examples are purposefully omitted. We need your own information and your own opinions that are given in your own words, about one of your personal experiences in implementing a change.

Please be as specific as possible in all of your answers. Initially, spell out all of the acronyms that you use in your responses. If at any time you need more space, feel free to use the backs of the sheets. If you still require more space, attach additional sheets of paper. Please **DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME** on the questionnaire.

PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY AND GIVE AS MANY DETAILS AS POSSIBLE.

DETAILS ARE CRITICAL FOR THE ANALYSIS OF THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.

SECTION I - SELECTION OF A CHANGE INCIDENT

1. At this time, think about a recent change project that you can remember clearly where you were involved with an organizational contentious change and you were required to expend a large amount of effort. Jot down a few sentences DESCRIBING THE CHANGE and WHAT WERE YOU REQUIRED TO DO? Include any specific incidents or events that preceded the change.

2. Which of the following best describes the type of organization in which the change took place?

   - ☐ **Private Sector**
     Please specify (e.g., manufacturing, health care, engineering, etc.)
     ____
   - ☐ **Public Sector**
     Please specify (e.g., education, health care, engineering, etc.)
     ____

3. Overall, how many individuals were employed by the organization where the change took place? __________

4. Approximately what percentage of the organization's employees was directly affected by the change? __________ %

5. How long ago did the change you described occur? ____________________

6. At what levels of the organization were the employees that initially planned the change?

   - ☐ **Only upper-level managers**
   - ☐ **Primarily upper-level managers**
   - ☐ **Primarily middle-level managers**
   - ☐ **Primarily lower-level managers**
   - ☐ **Primarily non-managerial employees**
   - ☐ **Both managers and non-managerial employees were actively involved**

7. How successful was the implementation of the contentious change?

EXAMPLES FOR SECTION II AND SECTION III

In the next two sections, you will be asked a number of open-ended questions in reference to the change that you described. It is very important that you describe your attitudes and feelings in detail. We are interested in what your thoughts were as well as why you developed these thoughts.

EXAMPLES of **UNCLEAR RESPONSES**
are provided here to help you understand what information is needed.

QUESTION	How were the hostile questions answered? How effective were the responses?
UNCLEAR RESPONSE	We gave the organizational member who asked the question more information and that effectively addressed the issue.
COMMENT	Although this answer does explain how a question was answered, it does not explain **what information** was given or **how the person** responded to the information. Did you provide technical information that addressed the individual's concerns? Did the individual appear to understand the issue more clearly and accept leadership's ideas? Or, did the response elicit more questions?

QUESTION	What did you think and how did you feel at the time when you first heard of the change? Explain why you may have had these thoughts or experienced these feelings.
UNCLEAR RESPONSE	"Happy, excited."
COMMENT	Although this answer does explain the feelings that you felt at the time, it does not explain **why** you may have experienced these feelings or describe **what factors** may have contributed to those feelings. Were you "happy" because the change would help you do your job? Why did the change "excite" you?

SECTION II - HOSTILE QUESTIONS

<u>DIRECTIONS.</u> Please list any hostile questions you or the organizational leaders encountered **IN REFERENCE TO THE CHANGE YOU DESCRIBED** in Section I.

<u>Hostile Question</u>
A QUESTION OR STATEMENT POSED BY AN ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBER THAT REQUESTS INFORMATION FROM A CHANGE AGENT OR ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERS THAT IS CONFRONTATIONAL AND MAY HAVE NO DESIRABLE RESPONSE OR LEAVES A NEGATIVE IMPRESSION
FOR INSTANCE: "WHY ARE YOU MAKING MY JOB HARDER WITH THIS

1. What HOSTILE questions did you and the organizational leaders encounter?

2. How were the questions answered? How effective were the responses? What response would you suggest, if different from the answer you gave or witnessed?

SECTION III - ATTITUDES WITH REGARDS TO THE CHANGE INCIDENT

DIRECTIONS. Please answer all of the questions in this section **IN REFERENCE TO THE CHANGE YOU DESCRIBED** in Section I. In particular, focus on the time when you FIRST got involved or heard about the change.

1. What did the organizational members think and feel when they first encountered the change? In your experience, what causes these thoughts and feelings?

2. What concerned the organizational members? Explain why these things seemed important or significant.

3. In your own words, what are the critical elements of readiness for change?

SECTION IV - PERSONAL BACKGROUND

DIRECTIONS. This final section contains items regarding your personal characteristics. These items are very important for statistical purposes. Respond to each item by WRITING IN THE INFORMATION requested or CHECKING THE BOX ☑ that best describes you.

1. Describe your primary career field or profession (e.g., consultant, personnel management, etc.)? ____

2. Please indicate the highest level of education that you have attained.

- ☐ **Some High School**
- ☐ **High School Diploma**
- ☐ **Associate's degree**
- ☐ **Bachelor's degree**
- ☐ **Master's degree**
- ☐ **Doctorate degree**
- ☐ **Other (please specify)** ______________________________

3. What is your age? __________ years

4. What is your gender?

☐ **Male** ☐ **Female**

5. How long had you been a member of Turnaround Management Association at the time of the change you describe? ___________________

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO MAKE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

If you are interested in a copy of the results from this study, please provide your name, mailing address, and e-mail address on a business card, index card, or separate sheet of paper that can be removed from your questionnaire. Please DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME on the questionnaire.

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix B

ITEM CATEGORIZATION

The purpose of this exercise is to validate the categorization of the following questions. Detailed instructions and helpful examples will be discussed prior to the categorization exercise. The following five categories with their given definitions will be used for this exercise.

A. **Discrepancy** refers to the extent to which one feels that there are legitimate reasons for the organization to make some change (i.e., a general need for change).

B. **Appropriateness** refers to the extent to which one feels that the specific strategy or change initiative will produce the desired results (i.e., the change will benefit the organization).

C. **Efficacy** refers to the extent to which one feels that he or she has the skills (or will be provided the skills through training) and is able to execute the tasks and activities associated with the specific strategy or change initiative (i.e., the belief organizational members can actually do what is asked).

D. **Principal support** refers to the extent to which one feels the change agents (i.e. organizational leadership or consultants) are committed and qualified to successfully develop a specific strategy or change initiative and guide its implementation.

E. **Personal valence** refers to the extent to which one feels that he or she will receive intrinsic or extrinsic benefits from the implementation of the specific strategy or change initiative.

INSTRUCTIONS

Carefully read each statement. Then, think about the appropriate category (types A through E above) that you feel that particular question describes.

In the left most column, place the letter that corresponds to the **ONE** category that you feel **BEST** describes the question. Some examples follow:

Concept Assignment	Questions
E	E1. If we make this change, what is in this for me?
D	E2. Why did we go "outside" for the answers to the changes needed?
A	E3. Why is this change necessary?

The following examples will be completed as practice and discussed. Please place the letter that corresponds to the **ONE** category that you feel **BEST** describes the question.

Concept Assignment	Questions
	E4. What gives you the right to question the Founder's vision?
	E5. Can you give me one good reason for us to make the change?
	E6. Do you realize how much this change will cost me?

<u>**Categorization Task**</u>

Please identify the one category that you feel best describes each of these questions. Please be sure to describe each question, and do not omit any.

The attitudes that these statements may describe follow:

A. <u>**Discrepancy**</u> refers to the extent to which one feels that there are legitimate reasons for the organization to make some change (i.e., a general need for change).

B. <u>**Appropriateness**</u> refers to the extent to which one feels that the specific strategy or change initiative will produce the desired results (i.e., the change will benefit the organization).

C. <u>**Efficacy**</u> refers to the extent to which one feels that he or she has the skills (or will be provided the skills through training) and is able to execute the tasks and activities associated with the specific strategy or change initiative (i.e., the belief organizational members can actually do what is asked).

D. <u>**Principal support**</u> refers to the extent to which one feels the change agents (i.e. organizational leadership or consultants) are committed and qualified to successfully develop a specific strategy or change initiative and guide its implementation.

E. <u>**Personal valence**</u> refers to the extent to which one feels that he or she will receive intrinsic or extrinsic benefits from the implementation of the specific strategy or change initiative.

Concept Assignment	Statement
	1. What can you do that others have not been able to do to save this organization?
	2. Why should we help an organization that alienated us in the past?
	3. Why shouldn't we be looking for other employment; we have not had a raise in a long time.
	4. Why in the hell should we listen to anything these bastards have to say?
	5. Why should long-term employees accept wage and benefit reductions used in part, to fund a bunch of external consultants?
	6. Why should we listen to your input/advice, you don't know anything about this organization or its history?
	7. Why are you making this change now?
	8. Why were other options not offered?
	9. Why are you (referring to change agent) doing this to me?
	10. What is the reason for this proposed change?
	11. What makes you an authority for the changes proposed or their need/requirement(s)?
	12. We (the employees) have made considerable concessions in the past. If we make this change, will you give something back to us?
	13. The prior owners lied to us, what makes you think new owners will fix this problem?

Concept Assignment	Statement
	14. Did you buy the company just so you can sell the company and make "a lot of money"?
	15. Will the new owners invest money for improvements?
	16. We have been doing it this way for a long time; why are you saying I need to change the way I do my job?
	17. Do you think you know this property better than we do?
	18. What is really going on with the senior leader?
	19. If you claim this change is going to work, why can't you stop the negative rumors?
	20. Why are we changing a successful system?
	21. If we adopt this change, will there be layoffs?
	22. How can we serve all these patients and do all this paperwork in a normal 40-hour week?
	23. What makes you think you know enough about our company to lead us through this effort?
	24. How do I know the proposed change will work?
	25. Do we have the resources - financial, manpower, skills and systems - to make it work?
	26. Why are we being asked to work harder?
	27. Do you really believe this change will ever work?
	28. Who is responsible for developing this proposed change?
	29. Why are you cutting my pay?
	30. Who will be held accountable when this change fails?
	31. My workload will increase and I do not have enough time in the day as it is. How do you propose I accomplish my old and new task?

Background Information

This final section contains items regarding your personal characteristics. This information will be used to describe the group of people that completed this questionnaire.

1. What is your age? ___________ years
2. What is your gender?

    - ☐ **Male**
    - ☐ **Female**

3. Describe your primary career field or profession (e.g., engineering, medicine, personnel, etc.)?
    ____

Feel free to make comments on the back of this page.
Thank you for your participation!

Appendix C

Organizational change survey

Scenario: Imagine that you are at an organizational meeting where your organization's senior leader or change consultant is answering questions about a specific change initiative.

You ask the speaker, the organizational leader or change consultant, a question. For each of the question, pick the response you find most satisfactory. Satisfactory implies that the leader or consultant is addressing your concern and trying to cooperate.

Different responses may be provided based on different assumptions of what the true situations is. The leader or consultant does not lie.

You will see the same questions and responses several times. Do not let other responses sway your choices. Please answer all of the questions. If you wish to comment on any questions or qualify your answers, please feel free to use the space in the margins. Your comments will be read and taken into account.

Contact information: If you have any questions or comments about the survey contact Captain Michael S. Gore at the number, fax, mailing address, or e-mail address.

Captain Michael S. Gore

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INSTRUCTIONS

- Base your answers on your own feelings and experiences
- Mark only one answer for each question—the one that is most satisfactory
- Pick the most satisfactory response quickly
- Do not go back and change your answers
- If completing a paper version, please write clearly making dark marks (feel free to use a blue or black ink pen that does not soak through the paper)
- Avoid stray marks and if you make corrections erase marks completely

For each of the question, pick the response you find most satisfactory. Satisfactory implies that the leader or consultant is addressing your concern and trying to cooperate.

1. Why are we changing a successful system?

   a) There are a number of extremely technical reasons for making this change that would take too much time to explain.
   b) The current system will not continue to be successful--change is necessary for us to stay ahead of competitors.

2. How can we serve all our customers and do all the extra work associated with the change?

   a) The organization must first evaluate the impact of the change before we can answer this question.
   b) Talk to your supervisors--they will determine the priorities within your divisions.

3. Why are you making me work harder?

   a) Members from our test group can best explain what up front effort will be needed to learn this process.
   b) You shouldn't have to work harder--in fact, this change should decrease your workload.

4. If we adopt this change, will there be downsizing?

   a) This should not be a concern of yours, rather you should be worried about the downsizing that will occur if we fail to adopt this change.
   b) We are planning to shift workers as needed.

5. Why are we changing a successful system?

    a) The internal work group that studied this system can best explain its benefits and efficiencies.
    b) The current system will not continue to be successful--change is necessary for us to stay ahead of competitors.

6. Why were other options not offered?

    a) I can not offer any other options--resource constraints dictate this alternative.
    b) The internal work group studying this will have to explain how they selected this option.

7. If we adopt this change, will there be downsizing?

    a) I can't answer this now; we are conducting manpower studies to address this issue.
    b) This should not be a concern of yours, rather you should be worried about the downsizing that will occur if we fail to adopt this change.

8. Why were other options not offered?

    a) This is the best option available. All other options would have been frowned upon.
    b) There are no other options.

9. What makes you think you know enough about our day-to-day work to lead us through this effort?

    a) I can't provide you with that information now--you will be provided with a detailed background paper on my credentials when the time is right.
    b) The internal work group can best explain the specific steps to implement this change.

10. Why were other options not offered?

    a) I can not offer any other options--resource constraints dictate this alternative.
    b) This is the best option available. All other options would have been frowned upon.

11. Why are we changing a successful system?

    a) There are a number of extremely technical reasons for making this change that would take too much time to explain.
    b) The current system creates a number of problems.

12. Why are we changing a successful system?

    a) The internal work group that studied this system can best explain its benefits and efficiencies.
    b) There are a number of extremely technical reasons for making this change that would take too much time to explain.

13. Do we have the resources - financial, manpower, and systems - to make it work?

    a) The proposed change can be integrated into the existing framework of the organization.
    b) Talk to your colleagues that tested the new system--I believe they can best answer your question.

14. How do I know the proposed change will work?

    a) We are confident that it will be successful.
    b) The final data from the trial group that was surveyed have not been released--it will be provided when available.

15. If we adopt this change, will there be downsizing?

    a) I can't answer this now; we are conducting manpower studies to address this issue.
    b) The personnel office can best answer this because they are analyzing manpower requirements.

16. How do I know the proposed change will work?

    a) The work group that tested the change can best explain the expected benefits.
    b) This change initiative has already proven to be effective in many similar organizations.

17. Why are we changing a successful system?

    a) The current system creates a number of problems.
    b) The internal work group that studied this system can best explain its benefits and efficiencies.

18. How do I know the proposed change will work?

    a) The final data from the trial group that was surveyed have not been released--it will be provided when available.
    b) Don't think in terms of failure; instead, ask yourself what must be done to make this change work.

19. What makes you think you know enough about our day-to-day work to lead us through this effort?

    a) I think you would rather hear about my credentials (experiences) dealing with change, as oppsed to my knowledge of your day-to-day work.
    b) I am here to guide and lead you through the change not tell you how to do day-to day operations.

20. Do we have the resources - financial, manpower, and systems - to make it work?

    a) Talk to your colleagues that tested the new system--I believe they can best answer your question.
    b) I think you want me to explain how we are going to use existing resources to make this initiative work.

21. Why are we changing a successful system?

    a) I can not explain this now; you will have an explanation when our annual report is released.
    b) The internal work group that studied this system can best explain its benefits and efficiencies.

22. Why did we go "outside" for the answers to the changes needed?

    a) Outsiders didn't provide the answers; they only facilitated the process.
    b) The internal work group can explain why they determined that an outsider viewpoint would be the most beneficial to the organization.

23. Why did we go "outside" for the answers to the changes needed?

    a) Outsiders didn't provide the answers; they only facilitated the process.
    b) I am not entitled to discuss this information--it will be released once the change is implemented.

24. What makes you think you know enough about our day-to-day work to lead us through this effort?

    a) The internal work group can best explain the specific steps to implement this change.
    b) I am here to guide and lead you through the change not tell you how to do day-to day operations.

25. Why were other options not offered?

   a) There are no other options.
   b) The internal work group studying this will have to explain how they selected this option.

26. How do I know the proposed change will work?

   a) This change initiative has already proven to be effective in many similar organizations.
   b) The final data from the trial group that was surveyed have not been released--it will be provided when available.

27. How can we serve all our customers and do all the extra work associated with the change?

   a) Talk to your supervisors--they will determine the priorities within your divisions.
   b) Once the system is fully institutionalized, your workload will be cut, providing better customer service.

28. Why are you making me work harder?

   a) Members from our test group can best explain what up front effort will be needed to learn this process.
   b) This should not be a concern of yours, rather you should be worried about not having any work to do if we fail to adopt this change.

29. How can we serve all our customers and do all the extra work associated with the change?

   a) Once the system is fully institutionalized, your workload will be cut, providing better customer service.
   b) The new system will allow you to meet all of your customer's needs.

30. Why are you making me work harder?

   a) I can't answer this now; we are conducting studies to determine the extent of the increased workload.
   b) Members from our test group can best explain what up front effort will be needed to learn this process.

31. What is the reason for this proposed change?

    a) It would take a considerable amount of your time to explain all of the reasons for this change.
    b) Change is necessary for continued success.

32. If we adopt this change, will there be downsizing?

    a) We are planning to shift workers as needed.
    b) I can't answer this now; we are conducting manpower studies to address this issue.

33. Why did we go "outside" for the answers to the changes needed?

    a) We will not use an outsider's answers, but we are using his suggestions to help create our own solution.
    b) I am not entitled to discuss this information--it will be released once the change is implemented.

34. Do we have the resources - financial, manpower, and systems - to make it work?

    a) I can't answer this until the post implementation studies are completed.
    b) Talk to your colleagues that tested the new system--I believe they can best answer your question.

35. How do I know the proposed change will work?

    a) The work group that tested the change can best explain the expected benefits.
    b) Don't think in terms of failure; instead, ask yourself what must be done to make this change work.

36. Why are you making me work harder?

    a) You shouldn't have to work harder--in fact, this change should decrease your workload.
    b) You should not be working any harder.

37. How do I know the proposed change will work?

    a) The final data from the trial group that was surveyed have not been released--it will be provided when available.
    b) The work group that tested the change can best explain the expected benefits.

38. What makes you think you know enough about our day-to-day work to lead us through this effort?

   a) I am here to guide and lead you through the change not tell you how to do day-to day operations.
   b) I can't provide you with that information now--you will be provided with a detailed background paper on my credentials when the time is right.

39. Why are we changing a successful system?

   a) The current system will not continue to be successful--change is necessary for us to stay ahead of competitors.
   b) I can not explain this now; you will have an explanation when our annual report is released.

40. How do I know the proposed change will work?

   a) We are confident that it will be successful.
   b) The work group that tested the change can best explain the expected benefits.

41. Why were other options not offered?

   a) Other options were reviewed and this was the only acceptable one to offer.
   b) There are no other options.

42. What is the reason for this proposed change?

   a) The internal work group that studied the change can best explain the specific reasons for the change.
   b) It would take a considerable amount of your time to explain all of the reasons for this change.

43. Why are you making me work harder?

   a) This should not be a concern of yours, rather you should be worried about not having any work to do if we fail to adopt this change.
   b) You should not be working any harder.

44. How can we serve all our customers and do all the extra work associated with the change?

   a) Once the system is fully institutionalized, your workload will be cut, providing better customer service.
   b) The organization must first evaluate the impact of the change before we can answer this question.

45. Why did we go "outside" for the answers to the changes needed?

a) I believe the information you should be concerned about is not who helps with the change, but rather why we must change.
b) We will not use an outsider's answers, but we are using his suggestions to help create our own solution.

46. Why are you making me work harder?

a) You shouldn't have to work harder--in fact, this change should decrease your workload.
b) I can't answer this now; we are conducting studies to determine the extent of the increased workload.

47. What is the reason for this proposed change?

a) Change is necessary for continued success.
b) This is an important initiative--if we don't change, we will not continue to be successful.

48. Do we have the resources - financial, manpower, and systems - to make it work?

a) This new system has already proven to be effective in our test group.
b) I can't answer this until the post implementation studies are completed.

49. How do I know the proposed change will work?

a) Don't think in terms of failure; instead, ask yourself what must be done to make this change work.
b) We are confident that it will be successful.

50. Why did we go "outside" for the answers to the changes needed?

a) I am not entitled to discuss this information--it will be released once the change is implemented.
b) The internal work group can explain why they determined that an outsider viewpoint would be the most beneficial to the organization.

51. Why were other options not offered?

a) This is the best option available. All other options would have been frowned upon.
b) Other options were reviewed and this was the only acceptable one to offer.

52. Do we have the resources - financial, manpower, and systems - to make it work?

a) Talk to your colleagues that tested the new system--I believe they can best answer your question.
b) This new system has already proven to be effective in our test group.

53. Why are we changing a successful system?

a) I can not explain this now; you will have an explanation when our annual report is released.
b) There are a number of extremely technical reasons for making this change that would take too much time to explain.

54. Why were other options not offered?

a) There are no other options.
b) I can not offer any other options--resource constraints dictate this alternative.

55. What is the reason for this proposed change?

a) The internal work group that studied the change can best explain the specific reasons for the change.
b) I am not entitled to release that information at this time; however, a detailed explanation will be provided soon.

56. Why did we go "outside" for the answers to the changes needed?

a) The internal work group can explain why they determined that an outsider viewpoint would be the most beneficial to the organization.
b) I believe the information you should be concerned about is not who helps with the change, but rather why we must change.

57. Why did we go "outside" for the answers to the changes needed?

a) I believe the information you should be concerned about is not who helps with the change, but rather why we must change.
b) Outsiders didn't provide the answers; they only facilitated the process.

58. What is the reason for this proposed change?

a) It would take a considerable amount of your time to explain all of the reasons for this change.
b) This is an important initiative--if we don't change, we will not continue to be successful.

59. If we adopt this change, will there be downsizing?

    a) Downsizing is not planned to be part of this change.
    b) I can't answer this now; we are conducting manpower studies to address this issue.

60. How can we serve all our customers and do all the extra work associated with the change?

    a) The new system will allow you to meet all of your customer's needs.
    b) The organization must first evaluate the impact of the change before we can answer this question.

61. What is the reason for this proposed change?

    a) Change is necessary for continued success.
    b) The internal work group that studied the change can best explain the specific reasons for the change.

62. Why were other options not offered?

    a) Other options were reviewed and this was the only acceptable one to offer.
    b) I can not offer any other options--resource constraints dictate this alternative.

63. Do we have the resources - financial, manpower, and systems - to make it work?

    a) The proposed change can be integrated into the existing framework of the organization.
    b) I can't answer this until the post implementation studies are completed.

64. How can we serve all our customers and do all the extra work associated with the change?

    a) The organization must first evaluate the impact of the change before we can answer this question.
    b) You do not want me to tell you how to do this--I have confidence that you will figure out the best way to manage this initiative.

65. How can we serve all our customers and do all the extra work associated with the change?

    a) Talk to your supervisors--they will determine the priorities within your divisions.
    b) You do not want me to tell you how to do this--I have confidence that you will figure out the best way to manage this initiative.

66. What is the reason for this proposed change?

    a) I am not entitled to release that information at this time; however, a detailed explanation will be provided soon.
    b) Change is necessary for continued success.

67. What makes you think you know enough about our day-to-day work to lead us through this effort?

    a) I am here to guide and lead you through the change not tell you how to do day-to day operations.
    b) I do understand what needs to be done to lead you through this change.

68. Why are we changing a successful system?

    a) The current system creates a number of problems.
    b) I can not explain this now; you will have an explanation when our annual report is released.

69. How can we serve all our customers and do all the extra work associated with the change?

    a) You do not want me to tell you how to do this--I have confidence that you will figure out the best way to manage this initiative.
    b) The new system will allow you to meet all of your customer's needs.

70. What is the reason for this proposed change?

    a) I am not entitled to release that information at this time; however, a detailed explanation will be provided soon.
    b) It would take a considerable amount of your time to explain all of the reasons for this change.

71. If we adopt this change, will there be downsizing?

    a) This should not be a concern of yours, rather you should be worried about the downsizing that will occur if we fail to adopt this change.
    b) Downsizing is not planned to be part of this change.

72. Why are you making me work harder?

    a) I can't answer this now; we are conducting studies to determine the extent of the increased workload.
    b) This should not be a concern of yours, rather you should be worried about not having any work to do if we fail to adopt this change.

73. Why did we go "outside" for the answers to the changes needed?

a) We will not use an outsider's answers, but we are using his suggestions to help create our own solution.
b) Outsiders didn't provide the answers; they only facilitated the process.

74. Do we have the resources - financial, manpower, and systems - to make it work?

a) This new system has already proven to be effective in our test group.
b) The proposed change can be integrated into the existing framework of the organization.

75. Why are we changing a successful system?

a) The current system will not continue to be successful--change is necessary for us to stay ahead of competitors.
b) The current system creates a number of problems.

76. Why did we go "outside" for the answers to the changes needed?

a) I am not entitled to discuss this information--it will be released once the change is implemented.
b) I believe the information you should be concerned about is not who helps with the change, but rather why we must change.

77. If we adopt this change, will there be downsizing?

a) The personnel office can best answer this because they are analyzing manpower requirements.
b) We are planning to shift workers as needed.

78. Do we have the resources - financial, manpower, and systems - to make it work?

a) I think you want me to explain how we are going to use existing resources to make this initiative work.
b) The proposed change can be integrated into the existing framework of the organization.

79. How can we serve all our customers and do all the extra work associated with the change?

a) The new system will allow you to meet all of your customer's needs.
b) Talk to your supervisors--they will determine the priorities within your divisions.

80. How do I know the proposed change will work?

a) This change initiative has already proven to be effective in many similar organizations.
b) We are confident that it will be successful.

81. Why did we go "outside" for the answers to the changes needed?

a) The internal work group can explain why they determined that an outsider viewpoint would be the most beneficial to the organization.
b) We will not use an outsider's answers, but we are using his suggestions to help create our own solution.

82. What makes you think you know enough about our day-to-day work to lead us through this effort?

a) I think you would rather hear about my credentials (experiences) dealing with change, as oppsed to my knowledge of your day-to-day work.
b) I do understand what needs to be done to lead you through this change.

83. Why are you making me work harder?

a) You should not be working any harder.
b) I can't answer this now; we are conducting studies to determine the extent of the increased workload.

84. How can we serve all our customers and do all the extra work associated with the change?

a) You do not want me to tell you how to do this--I have confidence that you will figure out the best way to manage this initiative.
b) Once the system is fully institutionalized, your workload will be cut, providing better customer service.

85. If we adopt this change, will there be downsizing?

a) Downsizing is not planned to be part of this change.
b) The personnel office can best answer this because they are analyzing manpower requirements.

86. What makes you think you know enough about our day-to-day work to lead us through this effort?

a) I do understand what needs to be done to lead you through this change.
b) The internal work group can best explain the specific steps to implement this change.

87. Do we have the resources - financial, manpower, and systems - to make it work?

a) I can't answer this until the post implementation studies are completed.
b) I think you want me to explain how we are going to use existing resources to make this initiative work.

88. Why are you making me work harder?

a) You should not be working any harder.
b) Members from our test group can best explain what up front effort will be needed to learn this process.

89. If we adopt this change, will there be downsizing?

a) We are planning to shift workers as needed.
b) Downsizing is not planned to be part of this change.

90. What makes you think you know enough about our day-to-day work to lead us through this effort?

a) I can't provide you with that information now--you will be provided with a detailed background paper on my credentials when the time is right.
b) I think you would rather hear about my credentials (experiences) dealing with change, as oppsed to my knowledge of your day-to-day work.

91. Why are you making me work harder?

a) This should not be a concern of yours, rather you should be worried about not having any work to do if we fail to adopt this change.
b) You shouldn't have to work harder--in fact, this change should decrease your workload.

92. Why were other options not offered?

a) The internal work group studying this will have to explain how they selected this option.
b) Other options were reviewed and this was the only acceptable one to offer.

93. How do I know the proposed change will work?

a) Don't think in terms of failure; instead, ask yourself what must be done to make this change work.
b) This change initiative has already proven to be effective in many similar organizations.

94. What is the reason for this proposed change?

a) I am not entitled to release that information at this time; however, a detailed explanation will be provided soon.
b) This is an important initiative--if we don't change, we will not continue to be successful.

95. Do we have the resources - financial, manpower, and systems - to make it work?

a) I think you want me to explain how we are going to use existing resources to make this initiative work.
b) This new system has already proven to be effective in our test group.

96. What makes you think you know enough about our day-to-day work to lead us through this effort?

a) The internal work group can best explain the specific steps to implement this change.
b) I think you would rather hear about my credentials (experiences) dealing with change, as oppsed to my knowledge of your day-to-day work.

97. What is the reason for this proposed change?

a) This is an important initiative--if we don't change, we will not continue to be successful.
b) The internal work group that studied the change can best explain the specific reasons for the change.

98. What makes you think you know enough about our day-to-day work to lead us through this effort?

a) I do understand what needs to be done to lead you through this change.
b) I can't provide you with that information now--you will be provided with a detailed background paper on my credentials when the time is right.

99. If we adopt this change, will there be downsizing?

a) The personnel office can best answer this because they are analyzing manpower requirements.
b) This should not be a concern of yours, rather you should be worried about the downsizing that will occur if we fail to adopt this change.

100. Why were other options not offered?

a) The internal work group studying this will have to explain how they selected this option.
b) This is the best option available. All other options would have been frowned upon.

The following scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Please read each item and then fill in the circle that best reflects the way you generally feel, that is, how you feel on average concerning the proposed change. Use the following scale to indicate your answers.

①	②	③	④	⑤
Very slightly Or not at all	A little	Moderately	Quite a bit	Extremely

Interested	①	②	③	④	⑤	Irritable	①	②	③	④	⑤
Distressed	①	②	③	④	⑤	Alert	①	②	③	④	⑤
Excited	①	②	③	④	⑤	Ashamed	①	②	③	④	⑤
Upset	①	②	③	④	⑤	Inspired	①	②	③	④	⑤
Strong	①	②	③	④	⑤	Nervous	①	②	③	④	⑤
Guilty	①	②	③	④	⑤	Determined	①	②	③	④	⑤
Scared	①	②	③	④	⑤	Attentive	①	②	③	④	⑤
Hostile	①	②	③	④	⑤	Jittery	①	②	③	④	⑤
Enthusiastic	①	②	③	④	⑤	Active	①	②	③	④	⑤
Proud	①	②	③	④	⑤	Afraid	①	②	③	④	⑤

This final section contains items regarding your personal characteristics. These items are very important for statistical purposes. Respond to each item by WRITING IN THE INFORMATION requested or CHECKING THE BOX ☑ that best describes you.

1. Describe your primary career field or profession (e.g., programmer, personnel specialist, etc.)? ____

2. Are you a supervisor? ☐ **Yes (How many people do you supervise? _______)**
   ☐ **No**

3. How many levels of management separate you from the most senior leader in your organization? ____

4. How long have you worked for your organization? ______ years ______ months

5. Please indicate the highest level of education that you have attained.

- ☐ **Some High School**
- ☐ **High School Diploma**
- ☐ **Associate's degree**
- ☐ **Bachelor's degree**
- ☐ **Master's degree**
- ☐ **Doctorate degree**
- ☐ **Other (please specify) ______________________________**

6. What is your age? ___________ years

7. What is your gender?

☐ **Male** ☐ **Female**

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO MAKE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ABOUT CHANGE & THIS QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE BACK OF THESE PAGES

Thank you for your participation!

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14. ABSTRACT
The purpose of this research was to develop a tool, using Speech Act Theory, which will help leaders better handle hostile questions they face during organizational change. Specifically, speech act theory, which outlines five question-response strategies, was used to test the effectiveness of question responses to hostile questions encountered during organizational change. The first step in this research was to identify the types of hostile questions that are asked during organizational change. Next, these questions were reviewed and like questions were grouped into one of five preexisting categories. Responses based on the five response strategies were then developed for a representative sample of the questions (two from each category). The final step in this research involved pairing each of the responses against one another for a given question, which enabled the selection of the most favorable response strategy.

This research tells the leader what type of hostile questions to expect, and provides general guidance about the content of the responses that can be used to respond to these hostile questions. This research effort determined change targets' preferences in reference to desired responses to hostile questions. This information can be used by leaders as a guide when initiating and implementing change.

15. SUBJECT TERMS
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